



No complaints! Just remember who won the Persian Gulf War!

U.S. Imperialism Seeks Control of Mideast—p. 1
by Tom Barrett

Balance Sheet on the Gulf War and the U.S. Antiwar Movement—p. 6
by Steve Bloom

Immediate Tasks for Antiwar Fighters—p. 7
by Samuel Adams

African-American Organizing Against U.S. Intervention—p. 10
by Claire Cohen

Labor Movement Special Section

Rail Workers Under Fire—The War at Home12
by L. D. Bradley

**From the Arsenal of Marxism:
The Politics of May Day.....13**
by Tom Kerry

Become a Labor Party Advocate!16

**Review:
The Struggle for Independent Unionism17**
by Frank Lovell

A Battle for Québec's Self-Determination21
by Barry Weisleder

Ernest Mandel in Moscow 22

Trotsky's Economic Ideas and the Soviet Union Today 24
by Ernest Mandel

World Congress of the Fourth International Is Held.....27
by Steve Bloom

Declaration on Events in the Baltic Republics28
Appeal for Solidarity with Algerian Women.....28
Greetings from a Veteran Trotskyist29

Treatment of Political Prisoners in the United States Is Denounced.....30

Notebooks for the Grandchildren.....34
44. To Each His Own (Cont.)
by Mikhail Baitalsky

Who We Are

The *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism* is published monthly (except for a combined July-August Issue) by the Fourth Internationalist Tendency. We have dedicated this journal to the process of clarifying the program and theory of revolutionary Marxism—of discussing its application to the class struggle both internationally and here in the United States. This vital task must be undertaken if we want to forge a political party in this country capable of bringing an end to the domination of the U.S. imperialist ruling class and of establishing a socialist society based on human need instead of private greed.

FIT members and supporters are involved in a broad range of working class struggles and protest movements in the U.S. We are activists in unions, women's rights groups, antiracist organizations, coalitions opposed to U.S. intervention, student formations, and lesbian and gay rights campaigns. We help organize support for oppressed groups here and abroad—such as those challenging apartheid in South Africa and bureaucratic rule in China, Eastern Europe, and the USSR. We participate in the global struggle of working people and their allies through our ties with the world organization of revolutionary socialists—the Fourth International.

The FIT was created in the winter of 1984 by members expelled from the Socialist Workers Party because they opposed abandoning the Trotskyist principles and methods on which the SWP was founded and built for more than half a century. We tried to win the SWP back to a revolutionary Marxist perspective, and called for the reunification of Fourth Internationalists in the U.S. through readmission to the party of all who had been expelled in the anti-Trotskyist purge. The SWP formally severed fraternal relations with the Fourth International in June of 1990. Our central task now is to reconstitute a united U.S. sympathizing section of the Fourth International from among all those in this country who remain loyal to the FI's program and organization as well as through the recruitment of workers, students, Blacks, women, and other activists who can be won to a revolutionary internationalist outlook.

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U.S. Imperialism Seeks Control of Mideast

by Tom Barrett

On February 22, 1991, U.S. President George Bush rejected a peace plan formulated by the Soviet government and agreed to by Iraq under which Iraq would withdraw unconditionally from Kuwait. On February 23, U.S. and allied ground forces attacked Iraqi forces in both Kuwait and in southern Iraq. By February 27 it was all over—Iraq's military machine lay in ruins. The Iraqi foot soldiers, still war weary from the senseless nine-year conflict with Iran, had surrendered by the thousands to U.S., Saudi, and Egyptian forces. The elite Republican Guards had been decisively defeated in a tank battle to the southwest of Basra and at the Kuwait City airport. At midnight eastern standard time, Bush ordered the cessation of all U.S. and allied military operations against Iraq, stating, "Iraq is defeated. Kuwait is liberated." The U.S. armed forces had accomplished their military mission in far less time than any supporter or opponent of the war—including the *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism*—ever imagined. U.S. imperialism scored a decisive victory, not only against Iraq and Saddam Hussein, but against the entire Arab struggle against imperialist domination.

At this time, Washington is in a position to dictate much about the immediate future of the Middle East. To be sure, the U.S. will consult and collaborate with the oil monarchs and neocolonialist heads of state such as Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak. These rulers, as representatives of the Arab bourgeois classes, understand that their class interests are best served by participating in Bush's "New World Order," which is nothing more than continued domination by the banks and multinational corporations without even the halfhearted resistance of the Soviet and Chinese bureaucracies. This was the U.S.'s objective in going to war. At least for the short term, that objective has been achieved. *Whether that objective will be achieved for the long term is not a matter for speculation, but for revolutionary action. The oppressed working masses of the Middle East—Arabs, Kurds, Turks, Persians, Armenians, and anti-Zionist Jews—will reverse George Bush's victory, if a leadership can be forged that is up to the task.*

The U.S. Chose War—From the Beginning

The justifications given by the U.S. government for going to war disintegrate at even the slightest examination. George Bush's crocodile tears for "poor little Kuwait" have been nothing more than an exercise in arrogant hypocrisy, especially after his own blatant aggression against Panama. His accusations against Iraqi president Saddam Hussein—nearly all of which are true, to be sure—raise the question of why the U.S., Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait helped Saddam assemble the fourth-largest army on earth, surpassed only by the U.S., Soviet, and Chinese. They also raise the question of whether the Iraqi dictatorship is any worse than the regimes which have allied

themselves with the U.S.—in Syria, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, and Turkey.

Most importantly, however, an examination of the facts reveals (1) that the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait on August 2 was *not* motivated by any desire on Saddam Hussein's part to "take over" the Middle East and its oil resources and (2) Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait could have been achieved very early in the crisis without a shot ever having been fired. *Kuwait was never the issue.* (See "U.S. Rejects Peace" on page 2.)

During the months that followed there were many other opportunities to reach a settlement. Each time, Washington shot them down. Pentagon sources have revealed that the prospect of a peaceful settlement of the crisis was routinely called the "nightmare scenario" at the Defense Department. Even as late as February 22 the United States rejected a Soviet peace plan which included "unconditional withdrawal" of Iraqi forces from Kuwait and could have avoided a ground attack. The difference between the Soviet arrangement's timetable for Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait City and the February 22 U.S. ultimatum's demand amounted to no more than 48 hours. *The U.S. did not even offer to negotiate and come up with a compromise between the two plans.*

At that time, no one—not even the military commanders in the field—expected such an easy victory for the American forces and their allies. All of the military commanders from the commander in chief on down warned that the war would not be easy, that there would be U.S. casualties and setbacks. Their rejection of every opportunity for a peaceful settlement shows how little concern they have for the lives of even American working people—let alone the lives of Arab working people. To Bush and his class, war casualties are only statistics, numbers on a ledger-sheet, no different than monetary profits and losses. But to the working classes of the United States, Iraq, and the other countries involved in this conflict, even one dead soldier is a family member who will not be coming back, someone who died—and probably suffered—because of someone else's disagreement, usually over money.

'Invisible Even in Death'

In a sidebar profile of King Hussein in the March 5 issue of the *Village Voice* Michael Emery concludes, "The Arabs are invisible people to Westerners, even in death." In the media coverage presented to the American people, there was no hint that underneath the rain of bombs were real flesh-and-blood people—children, their mothers, their grandparents, noncombatants. With all the talk of "kicking Saddam Hussein's butt," the real victims were people with whom Americans should have no quarrel, people who never chose this war, and people who have in fact suffered far worse at Saddam's hands than the

ruling family of Kuwait, in whose interests the war was ostensibly fought.

When the ground war began in earnest it became clear very quickly that the Iraqi soldiers had no interest in dying for Saddam Hussein. But die they did, by the tens of thousands. There is a seven-mile stretch along the road to Basra where the Iraqi forces were bombed which has become one of the most horrible sites imaginable. Strewn about are bits and pieces of

what were once human beings, blown apart and burned amid the twisted wreckage of tanks and trucks. This scene will never be presented to U.S. television viewers, but the allied soldiers, who thought they were coming to "kick Saddam's butt," have seen it, and their reports are filtering back to their families stateside. Leaving aside what happened in August, leaving aside what happened in November and December, if the United States had been willing to negotiate over the minor differences

U.S. Rejects Peace

Writing in the March 5 *Village Voice's* lead story [published in New York City], Michael Emery has compiled conclusive evidence to prove that Iraqi invasion of Kuwait could have been prevented and that even afterwards, an Iraqi withdrawal could have been effected without war. He also shows that the invasion, whether justified or not, was in no way an act of wanton aggression, but the consequence of months of Kuwaiti and Saudi provocations against Iraq. Emery writes:

The evidence shows that President George Bush, British prime minister Margaret Thatcher, Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak, and other Arab leaders secretly cooperated on a number of occasions, beginning in August 1988, to deny Saddam Hussein the economic help he demanded for the reconstruction of his war-torn nation.

In addition, parties to the Arab negotiations say the Kuwaitis—who had actively supported Saddam in his war with the Shi'ite fundamentalists of Iran, providing billions of dollars in loans and helping to acquire sophisticated weapons otherwise unavailable to the widely mistrusted Iraqi regime—had enthusiastically participated in a behind-the-scenes economic campaign inspired by Western intelligence agencies against Iraqi interests. The Kuwaitis even went so far as to dump oil for less than the agreed-upon OPEC price, something the Kuwaitis, with their vast holdings in the West, could easily afford but which undercut the oil revenues essential to a cash-hungry Baghdad.

Emery's source is not a confidential informant. It is none other than King

Hussein of Jordan, who has been directly involved in the diplomacy between Iraq and Kuwait since long before anyone outside the region knew there was even a slight problem. King Hussein has no reason to lie: his track record as a friend and ally of U.S. imperialism is unassailable. He has held power for 38 years—quite literally all his adult life and a remarkable achievement for a Middle Eastern ruler—and he has done everything within his power to make the Middle East safe for imperialist exploitation. His biggest accomplishment in that regard was the decisive defeat his forces inflicted on the PLO in "Black September" 1970. Furthermore, because Jordan is poor in natural resources and rich in Palestinian refugees, he has had to depend on foreign aid to keep his country economically afloat. One of the biggest sources of foreign aid has been Kuwait. Surely King Hussein would have many incentives to join the U.S.-led "coalition," and he is risking a great deal by speaking out. Those facts only give his statements added credibility.

Emery confirms that the issues which led to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait were: Iraq's war debt of about \$80 billion; Kuwait's refusal to abide by OPEC production quotas, thereby keeping the price of oil too low for Iraq to meet its debt obligations; and the border dispute centering on the Rumailah oilfield, which extends for a few kilometers into Kuwait across Iraq's southern border.

During July of 1990, Saddam ordered over 100,000 troops to the Kuwaiti border. At the same time negotiations were being conducted in advance of a summit meeting at Jidda, Saudi Arabia, to be attended by Saudi King Fahd, the emir of Kuwait Jaber al-Ahmad al-Sabah, and Saddam Hussein. Emery writes:

The secret arrangement... was that the Saudis and the Kuwaitis each would pledge an initial \$10 billion to assist the war-weary Iraqis, as a down payment on the \$30 billion Saddam demanded last May. The issues of war-debt reduction, the disputed boundary, and secret oil production were all supposed to be on the table....

King Hussein told the *Voice* that he had been so concerned about the parlous nature of the Jidda conference that he and his entourage flew to Baghdad on July 30. That's when he first discovered how truly angry Saddam was....

The king immediately flew from Baghdad to Kuwait to urge the al-Sabahs to soften their attitude toward Iraq (at the time, the king had no idea that a rough agreement had already been sketched out). According to both the king and another participant, despite Saddam's army on their border, the Kuwaitis were in no mood to listen. Why were the rulers of this tiny city-state so sure of themselves?

Apparently, the Kuwaitis thought they knew something the Iraqis didn't. In their July 30 meeting, Kuwaiti foreign minister Sheikh Sabeh Ahmed al-Jaber al-Sabah, the emir's brother, began by making sarcastic remarks about the Iraqi soldiers near the border. The Jordanians rebuked him, urging the sheikh to take the Iraqis seriously at the mini-summit scheduled for the next day. Then Sheikh Sabeh shocked the Jordanian delegation by saying, "We are not going to respond to [Iraq]... if they don't like it, let them occupy our territory... we are going to bring in the Americans."...

The Jidda session lasted only two hours. To Saddam's astonishment, according to a source close to the discussion, the Kuwaitis offered an enraged Izzat Ibrahim [the Iraqi vice president]—the man who announced Iraq's rejection of the Bush ultimatum... a mere \$500,000. The meeting broke up without even a discussion of Iraq's oil production

that remained with the Soviet peace proposal on February 22, this horrible carnage would not have happened. There was no excuse for it—the “liberation of Kuwait” had been agreed to already.

We may never know the extent of civilian casualties from U.S., British, and allied bombing. One thing is clear, however: even though the bombing has stopped, Iraqi civilians will continue to die from the bombing’s effects for weeks to come.

It is impossible to understand what military value destroying Baghdad’s water supply and sanitation system had, but the U.S. Air Force did it anyway. Cholera, typhoid, infant diarrhea, and other diseases are killing Iraqi children even now after the war has ended. Is this what is meant by “kicking Saddam’s butt”? Whatever atrocities Saddam’s forces have committed—against Kurdistan, against Iran, against Kuwait, against the people of Iraq—they are puny in comparison to the high-tech atrocities

and border complaints. Two days later, Saddam invaded Kuwait.

The *Village Voice* obtained a copy of King Fahd’s invitation to the emir to the Jidda conference. Across the top is a note handwritten by the emir to his foreign minister. It reads as follows:

We will attend the meeting according to the conditions we agreed upon. What is important to us is our national interest. Do not listen to anything you hear from the Saudis and Iraqis on brotherhood and Arab solidarity. Each of them has their own interest.

The Saudis want to weaken us and exploit our concessions to the Iraqis, so that we will concede to them [the Saudis] in the future the divided [neutral] zone [where new oil reserves are reported]. The Iraqis want to compensate their war expenditures from our accounts. Neither this nor that should happen. *This is also the opinion of our friends in Egypt, Washington and London.*

Be unwavering in your discussions. We are stronger than they think. Wishing you success. [Emphasis added.]

After the invasion King Hussein attempted to bring about an “Arab solution,” with the misunderstanding that he had Saudi and Egyptian support for his efforts. He went to Baghdad to convince Saddam Hussein to withdraw his troops from Kuwait. On August 3—the day after the invasion—the king had agreement from Saddam that the troops would be withdrawn starting August 5 and that either Saddam himself or a representative would attend a second Arab summit meeting in Jidda on August 5. Saddam’s condition was that there be no public condemnation of Iraq and that Saudi Arabia and Kuwait live up to the terms of their pre-July 31 agreement. However, by the evening of August 3 the Arab League, meeting in Cairo, had at Mubarak’s urging issued a public condemnation of Iraq, and it was com-

mon knowledge that London and Washington were pressuring Mubarak to get the resolution adopted.

King Hussein insists that, in spite of George Bush’s dire warnings about the danger of Saddam Hussein’s “expansionism,” Saudi Arabia was never in any danger:

The king recalls how on August 7, after receiving an American cable warning that Saddam might gobble up the Saudi regime, he offered a visiting Saudi official “half of the [Jordanian] Army” if a genuine threat existed. But the Saudi said that help was not needed, that he had been with King Fahd that very day and the king had seemed confident and secure. Certainly no urgent need for Jordanian military help was mentioned.

But within 30 minutes of the Saudi official’s departure, King Hussein received news that the first U.S. troops had arrived. President Bush cited the threat to Saudi Arabia in his decision to send the Rapid Deployment Force to form the first skirmish line of Desert Shield....

But Saddam’s intentions were actually less critical at this juncture than Western intentions. In another conversation King Hussein had at around this time, with then British prime minister Margaret Thatcher, the Iron Lady let it slip that “troops were halfway to their destination before the request came for them to come.”

Emery’s report shows that had the United States and Britain encouraged measures which could have addressed Iraq’s economic difficulties after the war with Iran, Saddam would not have chosen to invade Kuwait. Instead, however, Washington and London encouraged the Kuwaitis in their intransigent insistence on payment with interest on their outstanding loans and their refusal to provide the least financial assistance, even though Iraq was virtually bankrupt by the war which the Kuwaitis and Americans had promoted.

Instead of warning of serious consequences of any Iraqi military action against Kuwait, in the famous July 25 meeting between Ambassador April Glaspie and Saddam Hussein, the U.S. disclaimed any interest in “border disputes.” Had such a warning been issued it is more than likely that Saddam would have taken the hint. Had the U.S. and Britain not pushed for immediate Arab League condemnation of the Iraqi invasion in the days immediately thereafter, King Hussein’s arrangement for Iraqi withdrawal could have succeeded.

None of the Iraqi proposals for settling the conflict diplomatically were unreasonable. If the U.S. and its allies had seriously wanted to avoid war, any of the Iraqi proposals could have been the basis for further negotiations if they were not immediately acceptable. Even though working people should reject any and all American meddling in the affairs of the Arab peoples, Washington’s refusal to work for a diplomatic solution clearly demonstrates that it did not want a diplomatic solution. When George Bush and Secretary of State James Baker said that they had done all they could to avoid war *they were lying*.

American working people are relieved that the war was short and that nearly all of their family members who were sent to war will be coming home safely. That sense of relief is for the present working against any demand for an accounting by the Bush administration. However, the bills for this extravaganza have not yet fallen due. As the military expenditures take their toll on funding for schools, medical care, housing, and transportation as at the same time the political situation in the Middle East fails to improve, people will inevitably begin to ask hard questions about “Operation Desert Storm.” The information which Michael Emery has provided will help to demolish the foundation of lies on which support for the war has rested. □

committed by the United States in the space of five short weeks. There may never be a formal war-crimes trial with George Bush in the defendant's dock—only those who lose wars are ever charged with war crimes. But the people of the region will not forget. U.S. imperialism will pay for its crimes in the gulf war. One cannot predict when, or even exactly how, but U.S. imperialism will pay. That is certain.

What the U.S. Rulers Hope to Achieve

All the evidence, therefore, shows conclusively that Iraq's invasion and occupation of Kuwait was only a pretext for the U.S. aggression. When Saddam Hussein agreed to withdraw his forces, the U.S. quite literally wouldn't let him—even going so far, during the four days of the ground war, as blocking the roads out of Kuwait and bombing the Iraqi troops as they retreated. But if Kuwait wasn't the issue, what was? Why would the U.S. government spend so much money, put so many American soldiers' lives at risk (it should be understood that it does not have the least concern for Arab lives), and risk domestic unrest?

There are several reasons, not all of which are directly related to each other. The most obvious answer is oil, but in fact imperialism's access to the region's oil resources was never in any doubt. The two key combatants—the U.S. and United Kingdom—are not actually dependent on Middle Eastern oil. The U.S. imports about 40 percent of its oil, but the majority of that 40 percent is from non-Middle Eastern sources. Furthermore, the reason that the U.S. uses that amount of imported oil is that it is more profitable—it is cheaper both to extract and refine the imported oil than the domestic. American "rough-necks" (oil-rig workers) are underpaid and, as a consequence, oil companies have a hard time getting sufficient labor to produce oil domestically. Even so, American roughnecks earn about four times as much as workers in Middle Eastern and other third world countries. Most of the oil from U.S. sources contains more chemical impurities than the "light, sweet" crude produced in Saudi Arabia, requiring more refining expense. Relative to other prices, crude oil prices are today lower than they have been at any time since 1947. There is no profit incentive for oil companies to expand use of U.S. resources at the present time. If the U.S. were to be denied access to the Middle Eastern oilfields, for whatever reason, it would have little difficulty making up the shortfall from other sources, even without turning to its virtually limitless coal resources.

Conversely, the oil-producing Arab states have no other commodities to offer to the world market. Their only source of cash in international exchange is oil. If Iraq, for example, were to withhold oil from the world market it would hurt its own economy far worse than it would hurt world imperialism. Since August, no Iraqi or Kuwaiti oil has been sold, because of the U.S.-imposed embargo. Not only have the Western economies not been harmed, oil prices have not risen in a significant way. There is nothing wrong with the slogan "No Blood for Oil," since if the region's primary commodity were broccoli there is no way this war would have happened. But it should be explained that there has never been any threat to the U.S.'s wasteful, polluting, gas-guzzling lifestyle.

There are two distinct objectives of this war which deserve mention here, and they are not directly related to each other.

The first is domestic: it concerns the "Vietnam syndrome," that is, the reluctance of U.S. society to bear the burdens of military conflict. We will not address the social and political dimensions of this question (see "Balance Sheet on the Gulf War and the Antiwar Movement," by Steve Bloom on page 6 of this issue). However, one of the biggest problems with the so-called Vietnam syndrome has been the questioning of military expenditures. Since the fall of the Stalinist governments in Eastern Europe and the reunification of Germany, there is virtually no threat of war between the United States and Soviet Union in Europe. It has become much more difficult for the Pentagon to justify the obscene amounts of money it spends on sophisticated military hardware. The implications for the producers of weapons and military aircraft are obvious—and devastating. These corporations have a big influence in the U.S. government. We may never know what, if any, influence they exerted to bring this war about. However, there is already considerably less resistance to military expenditures in Congress than there was before the gulf war. The "thrill" of watching the Patriot anti-ballistic missiles hit the Iraqi Scuds or the "smart bombs" destroying Iraqi bunkers may fade after the bill comes due, but for the time being, the military budget is in far less danger than it was before the war.

The primary purpose of this war, however, was to reassert U.S. political domination of the Middle East—and this is, of course, where the oil dimension comes into play. Even though imperialist access to oil was not threatened during this crisis, continued social and political instability in the most important oil-producing countries on earth is obviously damaging to U.S., British, and other imperialist interests. The issue is less oil than money: the oil *revenues* from the sparsely populated desert monarchies are an important source of capital for the imperialist economies. Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates are all significant investors in the U.S. and Western European economies. The biggest banks are dependent on the oil producers' deposits to balance their questionable loan portfolios. Political instability may not threaten the oil flow, but it does threaten the cash flow.

When the Shah of Iran was overthrown in 1979, the U.S. lost its most important ally in the region. Washington could depend on the Shah's forces to intervene militarily—against nationalist regimes like Iraq's, against revolutionary struggles such as in Dhofar—without inspiring the kind of resentment that Israeli intervention would cause. That important strategic asset is gone. However, the assertion of U.S. military supremacy on a world scale, relative to the other imperialist powers and especially relative to the Soviet Union, demonstrates clearly to the bourgeois Arab heads of state with whom they will have to work in the framework of the "New World Order." Whose "friendship" is more useful? On whom can a bourgeois president, king, or emir depend when his rule is threatened? Under whose tutelage can Arab capitalist classes make profits? The gulf war has provided the answer: the United States of America. Washington will not be setting up colonial offices and walking roughshod over its Arab friends the way the imperialist powers did earlier in this century. They have learned a thing or two over the past 40 years. The "New World Order" is a "kinder, gentler" imperialism, in which the Arab presidents and monarchs all play for the team, all make money, and the workers and poor people continue to be exploited with

no one to speak for them. The "New World Order" is a formula for intensified class warfare against the Arab workers and peasants, in which the Stalinist bureaucrats and bourgeois Arab nationalists have either been neutralized or have joined in with the imperialists. The message is clear to every Arab leader: work with the U.S. and the rewards will be great; work against the U.S. and the costs will be devastating.

The Reasons for the U.S. Victory

As has been stated, no one on either side expected the U.S. to win the war so quickly and with so few casualties of its own. The Iraqi army was far and away the largest in the Middle East, with an arsenal built up with oil revenues and with nearly a third of the able-bodied male population in uniform. Especially worrisome were its chemical and biological weapons, supplied by the Germans and paid for with loans from Kuwait. They were never used. When the land war began, the frontline troops surrendered by the hundreds. What happened?

There are two primary reasons why the U.S. forces won so easily. One is military; the other is political. On the military side, it is virtually impossible in the twentieth century for an exclusively land-based force to win a war, especially a desert war. As Napoleon observed, an army travels on its stomach, and that rule applies most especially in desert warfare. Everything, including food and water, must be brought to the troops from outside. Disruption of the supply lines means almost certain defeat. For that reason, U.S. and allied air superiority was decisive. The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff general Colin Powell spelled it out: "First, we're going to cut [the Iraqi army] off; then we're going to kill it."

Knowing that in air-to-air dogfights his aircraft would be destroyed, Saddam ordered his pilots to fly their planes to neutral Iran, where they would be safe from American bombing. Iraq essentially surrendered the skies without a fight. Once that happened, the allied air forces could disrupt Iraq's supply lines and communications virtually at will, as well as destroying the country's civilian infrastructure and causing thousands of deaths.

By February the Iraqi troops' rations were so low that they were down to one meal a day at best. Some soldiers were reduced to eating grass and collecting rainwater. During the entire period the bombing was relentless. An army can withstand such an ordeal if it has the motivation to fight. This army did not. That is the political dimension.

Regardless of all the justifications Saddam Hussein and his apologists have given for the annexation of Kuwait, it is very clear that the soldiers who were called upon to fight and die did not feel in their guts that Kuwait was Iraq's nineteenth province. Kuwait has not been united with Iraq during any of the soldiers' lifetimes. They did not feel that they were defending their own country, and they were not willing to die so that Iraq could maintain possession of Kuwait.

In spite of the carefully staged popular demonstrations of support for Saddam Hussein before the war, the reality is that the Iraqi people overwhelmingly hate and fear him and his secret police. Any expression of dissent over the past 20 years has been brutally repressed, as members of the Iraqi Communist Party, Kurdish nationalists, and Shiite fundamentalists can attest. Furthermore, instead of spending Iraq's oil revenues

on improved living standards for the working people, Saddam has spent it on weaponry. For what purpose? Did the Iraqi people benefit from his attack on Iran? Did the annexation of Kuwait improve Iraqi living standards? Nevertheless, the poor people could see a collection of military officers, policemen, and corrupt bureaucrats—often Saddam's own relatives from Tikrit—enjoying a luxurious lifestyle at their expense. When a soldier is sitting in a foxhole, hungry, cold, and scared to death, it is this reality that he sees, not the rhetoric about Arab unity against the "infidel." When faced with the choice of staying on the front lines and enduring hunger, bombing, and probably death when the attack came or surrendering to the allied forces and getting water and a hot meal, it is understandable that hundreds of soldiers took the latter choice.

The clear lesson is that if a war remains exclusively conventional, a contest of arms on the battlefield, *imperialist forces cannot be defeated*. The only way imperialism can be defeated is through *revolutionary* struggle, one which mobilizes the entire mass of the population. Whatever may have been the political weaknesses of the Vietnamese leadership, this much they understood, and they instilled in the Vietnamese people a cause for which they were willing to suffer and die if necessary. The Vietnamese understood that depriving their military foe of his will to fight was another important military objective. They considered the American people to be their potential *allies*, not enemies, and worked actively with Americans who opposed the war to mobilize the antiwar sentiment which grew throughout the period of the war.

Such a revolutionary mobilization against imperialism would have also claimed Saddam Hussein as a victim. Saddam is an anti-imperialist only in rhetoric. In reality he is the political representative of the Iraqi bourgeoisie, the same class which rules in the United States. He has more in common with Jaber al-Ahmad al-Sabah and with George Bush than he has with the working class and peasant soldiers whom he sent out to die at the front lines. Under Saddam Hussein's leadership the kind of fight which could actually defeat the U.S. could not be organized. The central lesson of the gulf war for the Arab masses is that there is no future for their struggle if it remains trapped within the bourgeois nationalist framework. Only a revolutionary proletarian struggle will be successful in liberating the Arab peoples from imperialist domination.

Has Bush Accomplished Imperialism's Goals?

On February 27 it appeared that the United States had won a smashing victory and was well on its way to imposing its will on the Middle East, at least for the foreseeable future. At this writing, it is less clear, for the masses have a way of thwarting the best-laid imperialist postwar plans. Iraqi regular soldiers are following the pattern of the defeated Russian troops of World War I and are turning their weapons against their own government. They are angry at having been put on the battle front, even without food and water, for a cause which meant nothing to them.

The Shiite clergy—possibly with Iranian intervention—is attempting to capitalize on the unrest. The majority of Iraq's people are Shiites, and their religious leaders have a long

(Continued on page 9)

Balance Sheet on the Gulf War and the U.S. Antiwar Movement

by Steve Bloom

On Friday, March 1, after the overwhelming rout of Iraqi troops by U.S. forces and after George Bush's approval rating in opinion polls surged to 86 percent, the American president declared, "By God, we've kicked the Vietnam syndrome once and for all." That is a noteworthy statement from several points of view.

In the first place, it is noteworthy because if even a week before—when the ground campaign had not yet begun—any news reporter had taken the trouble to ask George Bush if he was worried about the Vietnam syndrome, Bush's reply would probably have been to deny that any such thing even existed. That reply would have been typical U.S. ruling class disinformation. Bush was well aware throughout his military buildup and throughout the war itself of the mistrust among the people of this country generated by imperialist military activities ever since the bitter experience of Vietnam.

Bush had claimed a number of times over the last few months that he was not concerned with the antiwar demonstrations that erupted in response to his Mideast policies. But his March 1 declaration about "kicking the Vietnam syndrome" reveals that these claims were nothing more than a public relations ploy, designed to discourage people from joining the antiwar movement. In that sense Bush's approach was similar to Richard Nixon's—who asserted, during his tenure in the White House, that he was busy watching football when hundreds of thousands marched past in protest against the Vietnam conflict. In his memoirs, years later, Nixon told the truth: those demonstrations were decisive in preventing him from using nuclear weapons against the North Vietnamese.

The entire U.S. strategy in the Persian Gulf war was designed from the beginning with the Vietnam syndrome firmly in mind. The initial target was chosen in order to maximize its propaganda advantages. Saddam Hussein was, after all, an individual unlikely to gain much sympathy with masses of people in the United States due to his long record of atrocities. The invasion of Kuwait was not a progressive, liberating, or even anti-imperialist struggle. And Bush was banking on the war itself being quick (though even he was probably surprised by how quick it actually

was), with a minimum of U.S. casualties. Despite its relatively large military force, Iraq remains, after all, a small country which could hardly expect to compete with the crushing technological firepower of the U.S. and its allies.

Given the overwhelming propaganda advantages of a compliant U.S. press—which was censored to boot—a short war would mean little time for the depth of the disaster being visited upon the Iraqi people (probably more than 100,000 dead, including massive numbers of civilians) to have an impact on the U.S. population.

Imperialists Succeed in War Aims

In this sense, the war was certainly an overwhelming victory for U.S. imperialism. Washington succeeded in all of its major military and political objectives:

- Iraqi troops were driven from Kuwait.
- Iraq's potential for future independent military initiatives was destroyed—not only through the elimination of most of its military arsenal, but also because of the cost of rebuilding the country and paying reparations to Kuwait and other nations, on top of an already unpayable international debt stemming from its previous war with Iran.
- The technological improvements in the Pentagon's arsenal were tried out under battle conditions and passed the test. Even given the fact that the desert war constituted an ideal environment for U.S. firepower, the laser-guided bombs and other scientific weaponry proved deadly effective.
- The U.S. reasserted its continued superiority, among all of the imperialist powers, from a military point of view.
- The basis was established for a continued U.S. military presence in the Persian Gulf region. Even if most of the reserves and regular troops are withdrawn in a few months, military bases and support troops will remain.
- The U.S. alliance with Arab regimes in countries such as Saudi Arabia and Egypt held together. This is an important diplomatic coup for U.S. imperialism, which has long been isolated in the Arab world because

of its strategic ties to the state of Israel.

- At least tacit support for the war was gained from Moscow and Peking. The withdrawal of the USSR as even a token opponent of U.S. foreign policy removes a serious concern for the warmakers, one that has tended to limit the military options of the imperialists in the past.
- Majority public opinion held firm in the U.S. in support of Washington's war aims.
- Saddam Hussein was not driven out of power, it is true. The U.S. armies stopped short of marching on Baghdad and putting him on trial for "war crimes." But it is questionable whether Hussein can continue to rule Iraq. As of this writing there are reports of unrest, bordering on civil war, inside a number of Iraqi cities.

All of this cannot help but have extremely negative effects for the international relationship of forces between imperialism on the one hand and the world's working and oppressed peoples on the other. The U.S. rulers have demonstrated once again that they are ready to rain death and destruction on any nation that dares to defy their edicts.

Proving this was, in fact, the main reason why Bush rejected any and every diplomatic solution that was offered for the crisis. It was clear at a number of points that Hussein could have been forced to withdraw from Kuwait without a shot having been fired. Even the day before the ground war began, the Iraqi president accepted a Soviet plan for withdrawal from all of Kuwait within three weeks. But Bush put forward his own ultimatum of one week for withdrawal and went ahead with the ground campaign. *The ground war was, in essence, launched in the name of fourteen days' difference between the Soviet proposal and Bush's demands!* Clearly, the objectives here were political. As Bush himself explained back in January, speaking to relatives of military personnel serving in the gulf, his goal was to let the world know that "what we say goes!"

One could make an interesting historical parallel in all of this with President Truman's decision to drop the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. That barbaric act was also totally unnecessary from a military point of view, as Japan

was already prepared to sue for peace. But Truman then, like Bush today, wanted to try out his new military hardware, and to show the world what was in store for any country that dared to challenge U.S. hegemony around the globe.

The gulf war was the most recent, and by far the most successful, in a string of efforts during the last decade by both the Reagan and Bush administrations to find ways of justifying, in the eyes of domestic public opinion, the use of U.S. military forces overseas. The invasion of Grenada was the first, followed by the bombing of Libya and the invasion of Panama. The gulf war, of course, dwarfs these other actions both in terms of its military importance and its effect on the political situation in the USA. Most likely, with this success, Bush will now be emboldened to use the U.S. military more freely. Certainly the risks faced by liberation struggles in countries like El Salvador, and the dangers of direct U.S. intervention in places like Nicaragua and Cuba, have increased dramatically.

Strong Antiwar Movement

But the question of the Vietnam syndrome cannot be dismissed quite so cavalierly as Bush tried (or pretended) to do in his March 1 comment. Probably his statement was only partially a boast. In part it could well have been a further pursuit of the old strategy of disinformation. Because any balance sheet about what happened in the U.S. during the war must also include

the antiwar movement that arose among broad layers of the population—a movement that owed a large debt to the Vietnam experience and which displayed extremely strong and positive features.

Bombing raids against Iraq began on January 16. On January 19 over 100,000 marched as part of coordinated national demonstrations in Washington and San Francisco. A week later nearly half a million came out in the same two cities plus Los Angeles. Organizing for these actions had begun, of course, even before the bombing. And, beginning with nationally coordinated local demonstrations in October, tens of thousands had already taken to the streets to protest Bush's military buildup.

The movement that emerged against the war was an interesting mix of newly radicalizing individuals and long-time activists. Many of those long-time activists first began their political involvement during the Vietnam war, and the experience they gained in that struggle proved to be an essential factor this time around. It allowed opponents of the gulf war to organize such significant demonstrations as quickly as they did. U.S. troops had been involved in combat in Vietnam for years before demonstrations in the U.S. numbered in the hundreds of thousands.

A coalition form of organization for these actions sprang up on both a national level and in local areas all across the

country. This was modeled directly on the kinds of committees that successfully organized the most effective demonstrations of the Vietnam era.

The recent movement owed a debt to the Vietnam antiwar movement on the political front as well. The demand for "U.S. Troops Out" was almost instantly embraced by a large majority of those who organized against the gulf war. Others, who wanted to raise slogans such as "let sanctions work" or "for a negotiated solution," found themselves most often in a distinct minority during planning meetings. This, too, stands in marked contrast to the Vietnam era, when it took years before the "Out Now" position gained the support of a majority of activists. The political logic that ultimately convinced Vietnam-era veterans to adopt this consistent, anti-imperialist slogan did not have to be rediscovered this time around.

To be sure, the war remained popular with most of the American public. But those who opposed it were vocal and well organized. What's more, their ranks were not limited to a fringe of left-wingers. Marches, rallies, speak-outs, teach-ins were attended by people from every layer of American society. The National Organization for Women endorsed January 26 and mobilized a sizable contingent. Trade unionists, church leaders, Black community activists, and others all participated. Students joined in and began to be radicalized in massive numbers.

Immediate Tasks for Antiwar Fighters

by Samuel Adams

The word "crisis" means both danger and opportunity. The danger stemming from U.S. imperialism's lightning-fast victory over Iraq is self evident. But the situation also offers new opportunities for struggle against capitalist oppression that should be capitalized upon without delay. Chief among these is the question of human needs and domestic spending.

For years the U.S. ruling class has been imposing an austerity budget upon workers, African-Americans and other minorities, the unemployed, the homeless, the ill-fed and the have-nots. There was no money or inadequate money available—for jobs, housing, health care (including AIDS research), environmental and educational needs. Now welfare payments are being cut in state after state for alleged lack of funds.

Yet the people of the United States have become acutely aware that there was in fact practically unlimited funds available to wage a war of horrendous death and destruction in the Persian Gulf. *Use this money now for social needs at home* is the demand that must be raised in every available forum: on the streets in mass demonstrations, in union meetings, in the

African-American networks that have sprung up, among other oppressed minorities, in the women's movement, at city council hearings, at the August 31 Solidarity Day march in Washington, D.C., called by the AFL-CIO, etc.

In short, antiwar activists must now *step up the war at home* even while they continue the struggle to prevent U.S. imperialism from unleashing more wars abroad. *The two are inextricably linked.*

The ruling class recognizes this. Henry Kissinger warns that "U.S. preeminence cannot last. . . . Nor can the U.S. economy indefinitely sustain a policy of essentially unilateral global interventionism" (Los Angeles Times, February 24, 1991).

Here's what the U.S. faces. The economy is sinking into deepening recession. The ranks of the unemployed continue to rise. Payments for the potentially trillion-dollar bailout of the savings and loan institutions continue to fall due. The record federal budget deficit continues to soar. The banking structure totters. Two-thirds of the states face bankruptcy. City governments cope with less money to deal with more aggravated socioeconomic problems. Under these conditions the fight over spending priorities and *how* public funds should be used will sharply escalate.

Those who marched against the war must now become an integral part of this fight. Especially since, as Kissinger acknowledges, there are economic limitations on the ability of the U.S. ruling class to intervene whenever and wherever it wants, those who oppose war must—more than ever—counterpose spending for human needs to spending for war. □

Prophetic Insight:

"There exists not only the possibility, but the *danger*, as long as American imperialism has command of this capacity to destroy the human race, whether by direct firepower, fire storms, or by subsequent fallout of strontium 90; while they have all that, there is no security whatever in this world.

"Here I would like to make a slight correction of a remark made by the speaker last night, when he spoke of the colonial revolution as the center of the international revolution. It seems to me he should have said 'at the present moment.' Because the colonial revolution can't disarm the American imperialists. Neither can the Soviet Union. They can only deter them. The only one who can disarm the American imperialists of their arsenal of death-dealing hydrogen and atomic bombs is the American working class."

—James P. Cannon

[From a talk, "What It Means to Be a Young Revolutionist Today," September 5, 1964, published in *Speeches for Socialism*, Pathfinder Press, New York, 1971.]

In an important sense, then, the Vietnam syndrome was far from overcome by this war. Before Vietnam, all but a tiny handful of people in the U.S. were willing to accept whatever they were told by the government about foreign policy—and especially about wars. Active opposition was limited to a very small circle. Vietnam changed all that. It made it legitimate to question and to actively oppose a war. During the gulf crisis, the numbers who exercised their right to question, to doubt, to oppose were still substantial, even if they remained a distinct minority. With all the yellow ribbons and jingoist propaganda, those who disagreed with the military intervention were able to conduct a debate about it with those who supported Bush's policies. That is not an unimportant legacy of Vietnam that remains in effect, and it will be felt again the next time U.S. troops are used in a war.

Quick War Favored Bush

The bottom line remains, of course, that Bush and the "patriots" prevailed in this debate. The reasons for this are not hard to understand—because the debate was waged unequally and the ultimate decision for most people to support the war was not based on logic, or rational answers to real problems.

The U.S. rulers have a tremendous propaganda machine at their disposal, one that can repeat *ad nauseam* their lies and distortions, representing these as "facts." One of the media's most effective messages this time was that "the whole world"

supported a war to drive Iraq out of Kuwait—despite antiwar demonstrations all over the globe, with participants numbering in the millions.

One of the factors that gave this message a particular measure of credibility was the support given by the Soviet Union to the many UN resolutions on the gulf, including the one calling for use of "all necessary military force." This traitorous position by the Gorbachev government was a pivotal factor enabling U.S. imperialism to secure its genocidal victory so easily.

The U.S. antiwar movement was at a great disadvantage in getting its message across. Most people who hear the distorted "news" presented by the media have no independent knowledge or experience with which they can challenge it. Those of us who opposed the war did not have an equivalent propaganda apparatus of our own; we were armed only with the truth.

Given a little time and some sobering experience with the war itself, and given even a small group of people who insist on telling the truth, we know that this truth can come to defeat the lies and propaganda of the imperialists. That is precisely what happened during the Vietnam war, and how the Vietnam syndrome came to be. The Vietnamese people, because they were struggling for their own liberation, fought tenaciously against the U.S. army. The length and strength of their resistance forced people here into a much closer association with the war—through TV and newspaper photos and through the stories told by returning GIs. This combined with

the presence of a relatively small (at first) movement of activists who were armed with the knowledge and information to expose Washington's lies. The result was an antiwar movement that, in the end, grew strong enough to become a key factor in forcing a U.S. withdrawal.

In the present case there was not time for such a process to unfold. The Iraqi army, despite all of Saddam Hussein's rhetoric, was not fighting for anyone's liberation, and was not inspired to fight to the death in order to keep Kuwait as a province of Iraq. Its weakness was a key and decisive difference, allowing Bush to sweep to victory faster than his lies could be exposed.

Future Remains to Be Tested

In the last issue of this magazine we published a number of articles that, as it turned out, were wrong in their projection of the prospects for this struggle because they assumed, as did many others, that the war would last considerably longer than it did. But there was one comment on the war in our March issue that was not made obsolete by the speed of the U.S. military triumph: the front cover cartoon, which showed George Bush throwing schools, social security, housing, civil rights, health care, etc., into the Pentagon's mill to be ground up and emerge as tanks, planes, and guns. The fact is that the war, for all of its impact on Bush's popularity rating at home, has done nothing to solve the underlying economic crisis that faces working people in the U.S. Municipalities are still cutting back on social services. Unemployment, homelessness, poverty, continue to be growing problems with no solutions offered by the Democratic or Republican politicians. If anything, the worsened federal deficit that will be one result of the war will only deepen these kinds of problems.

In addition, the military superiority demonstrated by U.S. imperialism will not do anything to solve the human misery or crushing debt that plagues the third world. Capitalism and imperialism remain in profound crisis internationally. Their victory in the gulf was certainly impressive. But it could also prove to be remarkably shallow. Because the social and economic decline that is eating away at the foundations of capitalist society are, in the end, factors of much greater substance than the purely military show put on by the allies in the Persian gulf. They can erode George Bush's popularity in the U.S. and abroad, perhaps not as quickly as it rose during the war, but all the more surely for that.

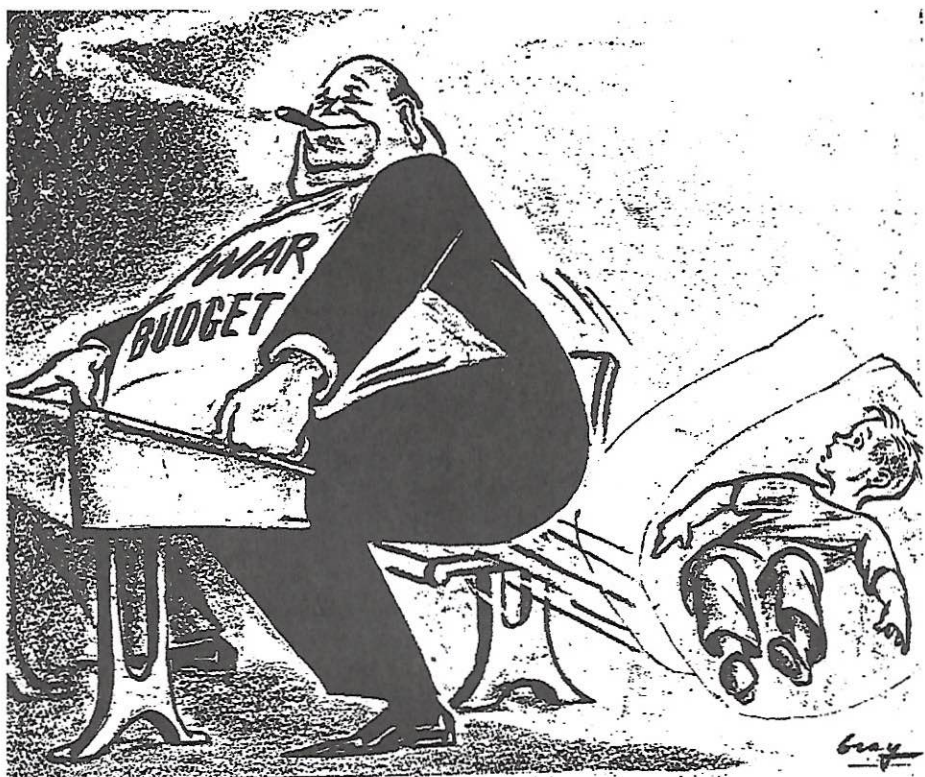
The social and economic crisis of imperialism means that the U.S. armed forces will be ordered to fight more wars, against other peoples who will not allow them-

selves to be pushed around by Washington. And the Pentagon's next military opponent may not present quite so easy a propaganda target as Saddam Hussein. The field of battle may not be as easily dominated from the air as the Arabian desert (even given all of the new and sophisticated weapons in the Pentagon's arsenal). The opposing army may feel that it has something more to fight for than the Iraqi troops did this time around.

Under such conditions the U.S. rulers know that they will have a fight on their hands—not only on the military front but in the battle for public opinion here at home. The political forces that organized the demonstrations against the gulf war will not be disappearing any time soon. They will be around the next time Washington tries to flex its muscles. The layer of students who began to become active during the gulf crisis may well continue to think through the lessons of the conflict, possibly drawing radical and even revolutionary conclusions.

The Vietnam syndrome has certainly received a blow. It would be unrealistic to expect, from this time forward, that there will be an immediate and instinctive reaction from the majority of the U.S. population in opposition to every military intervention by this country into other peoples' affairs. But Bush is exaggerating—either through wishful thinking or to consciously mislead—when he says that the Vietnam syndrome has been “kicked . . . once and for all.”

Antiwar activists must continue to educate, march, and mobilize at every opportunity. The real interests of the politicians



in Washington are determined by the pocketbooks of the big U.S. corporations. They are willing to trample on the rights of people all over the globe in order to defend their profits. The gulf war was carefully chosen to maximize its propaganda and military advantages. They will not always

be able to be so careful or so lucky. In their cynicism and greed it is certain that they will once again go that step too far, and our movement will find itself again in a position to effectively expose their lies and their real war aims. □

March 5, 1991

Gulf (Continued from page 5)

tradition of encouraging resentment against the Sunnites, for grievances both real and imagined going back over a thousand years. Saddam Hussein and his coterie from the town of Tikrit are themselves Sunnites.

The danger of continued U.S. intervention—using the civil strife as a pretext—is a serious one. Whether the American people, both in and out of uniform, will accept it is another matter. Continued vigilance and educational activities by the antiwar movement are absolutely necessary.

Regardless of how the Iraqi political situation is resolved, the world is not one step closer to peace than it was on August 1, 1991. Whatever one thinks of Saddam Hussein—and he has a lot to answer for to the people of Iraq—U.S. intervention has not improved the situation in the Middle East, it has made it worse. Possibly the biggest losers will be the Palestinian people: the Zionist state has been emboldened to repress them further, and the PLO will be considerably weakened both politically and financially because of Iraq's defeat (the Saudi and Kuwaiti governments, as well as the Palestinian profes-

sional community in Kuwait, were the primary financial supporters of the PLO, especially of Arafat's own organization, al-Fateh). As unrest continues to grow within Iraq's devastated cities, only violent repression can keep it in check, and the cycle of death will continue. This is George Bush's contribution to Middle East peace.

There is as well no question that Washington will feel far less hesitation about using its military might in other parts of the world. Its gulf war victory increases the threat to Cuba, to Nicaragua, to the workers and peasants of El Salvador, and to anyone else who dares defy its dictates. However, as the warmakers will discover, Saddam Hussein's misleadership was as big a factor in the Iraqi defeat as the U.S.'s technological military strength. Just as the Vietnamese, whose war machine was far less formidable than Iraq's, were able to defeat U.S. imperialism, so will genuine revolutionary struggles in the future. □

March 5, 1991

African-American Organizing Against U.S. Intervention in the Middle East

by Claire Cohen

It is a well-known fact that African-Americans were strongly opposed to the United States war in the Persian Gulf. Before the war started, polls consistently showed 70 percent to 80 percent of African-Americans against the U.S. going to war in the gulf. Once the war began, more than half of African-Americans remained solidly opposed. Black leaders openly called for active protest. On February 15 more than 100 Black leaders from across the country met at the Abyssinian Baptist Church in New York City, where they passed a resolution calling on the UN General Assembly to convene an emergency meeting to discuss an immediate cease-fire. Their statement described the war as "... wrong, unnecessary, unprincipled, and dirty... in violation of all standards of fundamental rights."

Most importantly, African-Americans became actively involved in the antiwar movement at the national and local levels. We participated in both the National Coalition to Stop U.S. Intervention in the Middle East and the National Campaign for Peace in the Middle East, although our representation in the latter group has been much smaller. Many local African-American groups have sprung up around the country, including African-Americans for Middle East Peace (AAMEP) in Pittsburgh (the group I belong to). Independently, the National African-American Network Against U.S. Intervention in the Gulf was formed. It worked to support already existing local groups in their efforts, as well as to encourage the formation of new groups.

The National African-American Network Against U.S. Intervention in the Gulf supported both the January 19 and January 26 peace rallies in Washington, D.C., as well as the national student calls for action against the war. It encouraged Martin Luther King holiday celebrations to focus on opposition to U.S. military intervention in the gulf. On February 15 it called for local days of action on April 4 and 6, the anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King and the closest Saturday to that date. It called for communities throughout the country to mobilize on Thursday, April 4, "to lobby and pressure Congress to end policies of militarism and fund human needs." On Saturday, April 6, it is proposing "marches and rallies to mobilize the local communities on a massive scale," as well as community organizing workshops, petitions, voter registration, and educational events around specific issues related to the goal of reordering priorities for human needs and against war and militarism. The group's literature states, "The goal of the day's activities will include signing up people to

continue organizing in the immediate and long term around a concrete program of action."

In Pittsburgh, the individuals involved in AAMEP came from a wide range of backgrounds and ideological perspectives. We have spoken at all local rallies and events against the war since the group was formed on January 16. We put an ad in the local Black newspaper, the *Pittsburgh Courier*, containing our statement (see box) and signatories. We were planning a march and rally through the Black community for March 16; but, due to the cease-fire, we decided to postpone our action to April 6. At that time we will hold a rally in the local community, followed by a set of action-oriented community organizing workshops in which we hope to motivate Black people to involve themselves in ongoing concrete actions—to struggle for economic and social justice here at home and against U.S. militarism and imperialism abroad.

To understand the African-American perspective against U.S. intervention in the gulf, one must understand the condition of our people here at home. Black people have experienced double-digit unemployment throughout the so-called economic boom of the '80s. Despite being 12 percent of the population in this country, we make up 24 percent of the officially recognized unemployed. In 1989, the median income of Black families in the U.S. was 57 percent that of white families, the same as it was in 1957. Fifty percent of Black children live in poverty. Only 56 percent of our children have health insurance coverage. Of African-Americans living in poverty, 27 percent have completed high school and 11 percent have one year or more of a college education, compared to 7 percent and 3 percent, respectively, for whites living in poverty. Black infant mortality is twice that of whites.

In 1988, Black life expectancy was 69.2 years, compared to 75.6 years for whites. Populations in 22 countries, including Cuba and China, have higher life expectancies than African-Americans do. Black males are twelve times more likely to die of homicide than white males; Black females four times more likely than their white sisters to be murdered. The leading cause of death for Black males from ages 25 to 44 is homicide. From 1980 to 1985, the number of Black males murdered almost equaled the total number of U.S. troops killed in the Vietnam war. Twenty-three percent of African-American men aged 20 to 29 are in jail, on probation, or on parole. A Black American is four times more likely to be imprisoned than a Black South African.

On top of all that, racism and incidents of racist violence are increasing significantly around the country. In the meantime, our government is beating a hasty retreat from civil rights, human rights, and working peoples' rights. It is drastically cutting social programs. Due to our oppressed conditions African-Americans suffer disproportionately from such cuts in social programs. During the 1980s tens of billions of dollars were cut from programs such as student loans, job training, housing, health care, and veterans assistance. In 1991, the underfunding of social programs is such that only 54 percent of mothers and children eligible for WIC can receive it and only 38 percent of children eligible for Headstart can be served; and these are two programs whose effectiveness has been well demonstrated. At the same time, during the '80s, the U.S.

government poured two trillion dollars into the biggest peacetime military buildup in the history of the world.

Now the Bush administration is talking about deeper cuts in social programs for the upcoming budget. The military "has redeemed itself," and so feels justified in asking for more funds for bigger and better weapons of mass destruction. Costs for rebuilding Kuwait are estimated to be between \$50-\$100 billion, and the bill for Iraq may be even higher. Of course, the administration plans not to include the figures for gulf war expenses in the budget, so it won't look like the military is getting much more! (I wish I could ignore my school loans like that in order to balance my budget!) Anyone who believes that the big profits the multinational corporations will make rebuilding the gulf states will trickle down to American working people, let alone African-Americans, must have been sleeping through the massive assault on working people's wages during the so-called boom of the '80s.

Faced with such conditions as described above, many African-Americans have turned to the military where there has been the promise of job training, educational opportunities, and economic security. In Pittsburgh, anyone listening to the local Black radio station will hear ads saying this several times a day. I have never heard any of these advertisements by the armed forces mention anything about going to war, the risk of bodily injury and being killed, or of being forced to kill working people from some other country overseas.

Lately there has been a strong propaganda effort within the Black community to stigmatize those opposing the war and increase African-American support for war and militarism. Editorials in major newspapers, such as the *Washington Post* and the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, have claimed that our ticket to respect, acceptance, and advancement in American society is our participating in the military and demonstrating our willingness to make "the supreme sacrifice for our country" by going to war.

But African-Americans know that we have fought valiantly, often distinguishing ourselves, and died in every war this country was ever involved in—from the Revolutionary War to the Civil War, to both World Wars, to

Korea, to Vietnam. Fighting in wars for the imperialist ruling class of the U.S. has not brought us one damn thing. We return to the same bad conditions and continue to be treated in the same racist way. The only way we, as a people, have made progress has been through our fight right here at home, through mass mobilizations in the civil rights and Black liberation movements. That's also the only way we'll keep the small gains we've won. We have to realize that being against the gulf war and U.S. militarism is the best way to give our young men and women a chance to "be all that they can be." We don't think that encouraging them to become "troops" in a rich man's war for the benefit of the multinational corporations and the U.S. ruling class is "supporting" them. Real support for all of our people, "troops" or not, is mobilizing the struggle here at home for liberation and a better life for everyone. □

African-Americans for Middle East Peace

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, CONDEMN U.S. MILITARY INTERVENTION IN THE MIDDLE EAST. WE HOLD THAT U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN THIS WAR WAS AND CONTINUES TO BE CONTRARY TO THE INTERESTS OF AFRICAN-AMERICANS. Furthermore, we oppose the casual attitude towards the use of unrestrained violence as evidenced by the massive bombings with no regard for human life. The heightened use of weapons of mass destruction has introduced an unprecedented level of violence against the Third World, the long-term catastrophic effects of which are unknown.

AFRICAN-AMERICANS WILL SUFFER THE MOST AS A RESULT OF U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN THE WAR AGAINST IRAQ. The Reagan and Bush administrations have spent \$2 trillion in their massive war buildup, diverting needed dollars away from domestic priorities. Clearly, racism is still a major part of the fabric of life in the U.S. as evidenced by the increase in acts of racist violence. Double-digit unemployment and gaps in income at every level have dogged African-Americans so fiercely that Blacks suffer from permanent recession. At the same time, Affirmative Action and Civil Rights gains have been rolled back, leaving our youth with few chances for satisfactory employment and educational opportunities. Alarming, African-Americans are imprisoned at more than four times the rate of Black South Africans. The drug scourge in the U.S. is threatening the future of our youth. Yet, the "war on drugs" is a sham. The U.S. Government has used the drug epidemic to further persecute the victims.

As a result, **YOUNG AFRICAN-AMERICANS, WITH LITTLE OTHER CHOICE, HAVE BECOME VICTIMS OF A POVERTY DRAFT.** They are used as cannon fodder of a foreign policy that relies on military aggression to benefit the multinational oil companies and the military-industrial complex. While African-Americans account for 12 percent of the population, we make up 30 percent of the army, the most susceptible service in a war. Black women make up an astounding 48 percent of all the women serving in the Gulf. Many of these women are mothers. With the invasion of Grenada and the bombing of Panama, our Brothers and Sisters have been used to maim and kill other Black people in the interests of the ruling class.

WE CALL FOR A TOTAL WITHDRAWAL OF ALL U.S. MILITARY FORCES FROM THE MIDDLE EAST. All conflicts in the region should be resolved by the people who live there. We stand in solidarity with all peoples of color around the world in their struggles for self-determination. **FINALLY, WE CALL FOR THE USE OF JUST AND PEACEFUL MEANS OF RESOLVING INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT AND A REORDERING OF OUR ECONOMIC PRIORITIES TO ENSURE JUSTICE AND EQUALITY HERE AT HOME.**

African-Americans for Middle East Peace will have a Rally followed by action-oriented community organizing workshops on Saturday, April 6, 1991. The theme will be "For Justice, Equality, and Human Needs; Against Racism, Militarism, and War." For more information on how you can get involved, CALL 242-6700.

On January 14 Presidential Emergency Board 219, appointed in 1990 by President George Bush, handed down to ten railroad unions and the major U.S. railroads contract recommendations that would put the burden of health and welfare benefits on the workers in the industry, drastically change work rules, and reduce rail workers' buying power by 25-30 percent by 1995.

Although there are many indications that these recommendations are basically acceptable to the top officials of the rail unions, for the first time in history the largest rail union, the United Transportation Union (UTU), will ratify or reject the Presidential Emergency Board (PEB) recommendations through a rank-and-file referendum vote. There is no doubt that such a vote would overwhelmingly reject the proposals as they stand now.

This has led to speculation by some industry observers that it might be in order for the U.S. government to take control of the nation's railroads for the 13th time in U.S. history. This would permit the government to act even more openly on behalf of the carriers, and to demand acquiescence from the rail workers and their unions. The last time this power was exercised was in 1950, at the opening of the Korean War, when President Harry Truman used this power to intervene in a confrontation between rail unions and the owners, under the guise of national emergency. None of these fictitious and temporary nationalizations have ever been utilized for anything but backing up the demands of the rail owners.

The carriers and the government have other avenues, however, not so dramatic, for using governmental authority to impose their solution. In 1988 a previous Presidential Emergency Board, PEB 213, recommended abolishing one-third of all train service jobs on the Chicago and Northwestern railroad. The UTU struck and Congress enacted the PEB recommendations into law in eight hours, without a single dissenting vote. Application of this scenario to the current national situation is what the carriers and the top rail union officials have in mind. Such a procedure would conveniently circumvent rank-and-file ratification and would take the union bureaucrats off the hook. The *Journal of Commerce*, a major transportation industry publication, says cynically: "It serves both sides interests to appear to be dragged, screaming and kicking, to a settlement that, for internal reasons, they cannot embrace publicly." Left entirely out of this scenario, of course, are the rail workers.

There are reports indicating that rail workers are beginning to take action themselves. Whether this can build up into enough pressure and action to disrupt the

Rail Workers Under Fire

The War at Home

by L. D. Bradley

conspiracy by the rail bosses and the union bureaucracy remains to be seen. A little time has been gained by the extension of a "cooling-off period," where neither the carriers nor the unions can legally take action until April 17. Rail workers have begun to hold meetings to discuss the ramifications of the PEB report in some places, including major rail centers such as Alliance, Nebraska, and Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota. On February 7 in Minneapolis, 250 rail workers met to hear reports from local union leaders on the PEB report and the losses that it would impose on the workers. A week later 150 rail workers picketed the federal building in St. Paul demanding no congressional imposition of the PEB recommendations.

U.S. railroad workers are governed by some of the most complex, reactionary, and oldest labor laws in the nation. The Railway Labor Act, signed by President Calvin Coolidge on May 20, 1926, essentially outlawing rail labor's right to strike, and establishing a complicated compulsory arbitration procedure in its stead, was a direct outgrowth of the six-month railroad shop-craft strike in 1922, involving 500,000 workers. The strike was ended when Attorney General Harry M. Daugherty, later imprisoned as a result of the Teapot Dome scandal, issued the most sweeping antistrike injunction in U.S. history. Only the federal court injunction issued during the 1894 Pullman strike, led by Eugene V. Debs and the American Railway Union, came close to Daugherty's universal prohibition of all strike support activity, even verbal and written expressions of opinion.

Ever since the great railroad workers' insurrection of 1877, the government and the employers have sought broad and comprehensive legal regulation of rail labor. In 1888 the Arbitration Act put the government into the middle of disputes between the workers and the carriers. In 1898 the Erdman Act brought the federal courts into the arbitration process. The Newlands Act in July 1913 established the U.S. Board of Mediation and Conciliation, appointed by the president to intervene in rail labor dis-

putes. President Woodrow Wilson seized the railroads during World War I and established the U.S. Railroad Administration Board (U.S.R.R.B.), which ran the railroads on behalf of the government and the rail owners until 1919. The Transportation Act of 1920 allowed the president and the U.S.R.R.B. to establish wages, working conditions, and work rules. By 1921 the board had abolished premium pay for overtime, eliminated the point-away-from-home pay, and reversed other hard won benefits. The U.S.R.R.B. was so authoritarian and arbitrary that the agency is considered the chief initiator of the 1922 shop-craft strike.

PEB 219 is a direct result of Railway Labor Act procedure. When the carriers and the union could reach no agreement in negotiations which began back in July 1988, President Bush picked a three-member panel from lawyers, professional arbitrators, and former rail executives to produce a recommended settlement: Robert O. Harris, former arbitrator for the World Bank, Richard Kasher, a baseball arbitrator, and Arnold Stark, a former lawyer to the U.S. Senate.

PEB 219 recommends that three-year rail labor agreements shall become four-year. The PEB suggests small wage increases that would not keep pace with projected inflation. Although they propose a cost-of-living allowance, the railroads would be permitted to seize 50 percent of it and apply it towards skyrocketing health insurance payments. By 1995, rail workers would pay about \$3,000 in out-of-pocket expenses towards health insurance at a time when the railroads, all privately owned in the U.S., are getting record profits. PEB 219 recommends abolishing the five-day, Monday through Friday workweek, established since 1949 for maintenance-of-way employees, many of whom travel hundreds of miles to work sites, and only see their families on weekends. The report also proposes abolishing historic distinctions between road and yard, or terminal work for train service employees, thus undermining the eight-hour day which still only exists partially for these employees.

These and many other far-reaching changes would constitute a major setback for rail workers in all crafts. Significantly, the PEB addressed none of the concerns of rail workers themselves, only issues put forward by the employers. Questions like discriminatory lower starting wages of new employees, time away from home, adequate rest, and days off were not even discussed in the report. The PEB recommends even further erosion in the collective bargaining rights of rail unions

(Continued on page 16)

The Politics of May Day

by Tom Kerry

*Tom Kerry was a participant in the labor and socialist movements for nearly fifty years. He was an editor of the **International Socialist Review** and the **Militant** at different times and national organization secretary of the Socialist Workers Party in the 1960s. Kerry joined the Trotskyist movement in 1934 in Oakland, California, and was a leader in struggles for union democracy in the maritime industry: the Marine Firemen, Oilers, Watertenders & Wipers Association, the Seafarers' International Union, and the National Maritime Union. In the last two years of his life, Kerry was a leader in the opposition to the repudiation of Trotskyism by the SWP leadership. He died in January 1983, at age 81. The following article is based on a talk he gave on May 1, 1976, over WDET-FM radio at Wayne State University in Detroit, later published in the **International Socialist Review**.*

The origin of May Day as an international working class holiday dates from early nineteenth century struggles of the American working class for the shorter workday.

The movement for a shorter working day began as early as 1829, some fifty years after the first American revolution, with a demand in the New York State General Assembly for legislation on the reduction of hours. Toward the middle of the century, Grand Eight-hour Leagues were formed in the principal cities and manufacturing centers of the North.

The struggle for the eight-hour day was a class struggle that was bitterly fought over an extended period of time. The movement became widespread following the Civil War, which imparted a tremendous impetus to capitalist production with the rapid introduction of machinery in the early 1880s.

By the year 1886, nineteen states and one territory had adopted legislation prescribing the hours of labor. But the laws were rendered ineffectual by clauses permitting "contracts" for longer working days. As a result, the average day was between fourteen and eighteen hours, rather than eight or ten.

At its founding convention on August 20, 1866, the National Labor Union adopted the eight-hour day as a central demand. It later appealed to the International Workingmen's Association (the First International) for solidarity and support.

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels were the prime movers of the First International at that time and had imbued the organization with the spirit of internationalism, i.e., of international working class solidarity in word and deed.

In September of the same year, 1866, the Geneva congress of the First International went on record for the eight-hour-day demand in the following words:

The legal limitation of the working day is a preliminary condition without which all further attempts at improvements and emancipation of the working class must prove abortive. . . . The Congress proposes eight hours as the legal limit of the working day.

Karl Marx, in the first volume of his monumental three-volume work *Capital*, published in 1867, calls attention to the eight-hour-day campaign initiated by the National Labor Union. In a famous passage, Marx underscores the identity of interest of Black and white workers.

Marx wrote:

In the United States of North America, every independent movement of the workers was paralyzed so long as slavery disfigured a part of the republic. Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black skin it is branded. But out

of the death of slavery a new life at once arose. The first fruit of the Civil War was the eight hours' agitation, that ran with the seven-leagued boots of the locomotive from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from New England to California.

Throughout its existence the First International enshrined the eight-hour-day demand as a major plank in its program of proletarian class struggle. But following the defeat of the Paris Commune in 1871, the weakened and faction-ridden International was shifted to New York from London and after a few years of precarious existence was finally dissolved in the year 1876.

But the movement for the shorter workday received added impetus following the devastating economic crisis of 1873, which brought in its train a seven-year period of acute hunger and mass suffering.

An economic upturn in the early part of the 1880s sparked the revival of the American labor movement. Foremost among labor demands was the eight-hour day. In 1884, the Fourth Convention of the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions of the United States and Canada, the precursor of the American Federation of Labor, adopted a resolution that read, in part:

Resolved, by the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions of the United States and Canada, that eight hours shall constitute a legal day's labor from and after May 1, 1886, and that we recommend to labor organizations throughout this jurisdiction that they so direct their laws as to conform to this resolution by the times named.

This proposal for a May 1, 1886, deadline for the establishment of the eight-hour day was reiterated at the 1885 convention of the federation. Throughout the years 1885 and 1886, strikes and walkouts for the shorter workday continued to escalate. The movement reached a peak on the first day of May in the year 1886. So militant was the struggle, so aggressive and determined was the spirit of revolt against the virtually limitless working day, that it is estimated that at least half the number of workers who struck won the eight-hour day, while most of the others succeeded in gaining a significant reduction in the hours of labor.

The city of Chicago was the center of the eight-hour-day-strike movement. That city had a long history of police atrocities and the workers were inclined to engage in militant action. There was also present a radical leadership schooled in the tactics of class struggle. Together, these ingredients combined to endow the movement with maximum effectiveness.

Describing the Chicago May Day events of 1886, the prominent labor historian Samuel Yellen writes:

The strike opened in Chicago with a display of great strength and much promise of success. Nearly 40,000 workers walked out on May 1 as prearranged, and the number jumped to 65,000 within three or four days. Nor was this the full strength of the movement in the city: more than 45,000 were granted a shorter working day without striking, the bulk of them—35,000—workers in the packinghouses. . . .

With such a mass movement on foot, Chief of Police Ebersold apprehended difficulties and called upon the entire detective and police force to be on duty Saturday, May 1; and his force was augmented by Pinkerton detectives previously engaged by the railroads, and by special deputies, many of whom were selected from the Grand Army of the Potomac [an organization of Union veterans of the Civil War].

In spite of these martial preparations, Saturday passed peacefully. The city, with hundreds of factories idle and thousands of strikers and their families promenading the streets, had a holiday appearance. There were processions and mass meetings, addressed in Bohemian, Polish, German, and English.

This did not suit the purposes of the Chicago bosses and their gunslinging hirelings. Faced with a strike of unexpected power and solidarity, the leading businessmen and manufacturers united to crush it. On April 27 the Western Boot and Shoe Manufacturers Association, with 60 firms represented in person and 160 by letter, was formed in Chicago for combined action. The chief iron and steel foundries, as also the copper and brass, declared that they would reject the eight-hour demand.

A session of the principal planing mills was held on the morning of May 1 at the office of Felix Lang to determine procedure against the strikers. In the evening these were joined at the Sherman Hotel by all the lumber yards and box factories, and the lumber industry in concert decided to grant no concessions to the workmen.

But the strike continued to spread. On May 3, the Chicago cops attacked a peaceful picket line outside the McCormick Harvester Works with clubs and guns, firing deliberately into the running strikers, who had been locked out since the middle of February. Four strikers were killed and many wounded—all shot in the back.

It was this police atrocity that sparked the protest meeting called for May 4, in the old Haymarket on Randolph Street in Chicago. Toward the end of this historic protest gathering, Yellen writes:

[Police] Inspector John Bonfield, hated throughout the city for his record of extreme brutality, led a detachment of 180 policemen to break up what remained of the meeting.

There was no excuse for this expedition, except Bonfield's desire for another headclubbing party, according to [Illinois] Governor Altgeld. . . .

The police halted a short distance from the speakers' wagon, and Captain Ward commanded the gathering to disperse. Fielden [an organizer of the meeting] cried out that it was a peaceable meeting. As Captain Ward turned to give an order to his men, a bomb was thrown from a point on the sidewalk a little south of the wagon. It exploded in the midst of the policemen and wounded 66, of whom seven later died.

The police immediately opened fire hysterically and shot round after round into the crowd, killing several and wounding 200. The neighborhood was thrown into terror. Doctors were telephoned. Drugstores were crowded with the wounded.

Who threw the bomb is undetermined to this day. Governor John Altgeld later declared "that Captain Bonfield is the man who is really responsible for the death of the police officers." Despite the total lack of evidence, eight men, prominent leaders of the Chicago labor movement of the time, were tried and convicted of murder in the first degree, and seven were sentenced to be hanged. One committed suicide in jail. Two petitioned for executive clemency

and had their sentences commuted to life imprisonment. Four refused to plead for executive clemency and were hanged on November 11, 1887.

Governor Altgeld later pardoned the three surviving Haymarket prisoners, after an intensive investigation that established that the arrest, trial, and conviction of the martyrs of Haymarket was a deliberate frame-up.

The executed victims of the Haymarket bomb frame-up were regarded as martyrs to the cause of labor, and their monument at Waldheim Cemetery in Chicago became a shrine visited by thousands each year.

If the big business tycoons and their police terror squads thought that the Chicago Haymarket massacre and the execution of the Haymarket martyrs constituted a crushing blow to labor's struggle for the eight-hour day, they soon found they had misread the lessons of working class struggle and labor history. For, in a matter of one year following the Haymarket executions, the American Federation of Labor, meeting at its 1888 St. Louis convention, voted overwhelmingly to resume its campaign for the eight-hour day.

Once again, May 1 was designated the date for united working class action to win the eight-hour day. The year 1890 was selected as the target year for nationwide strike action around the demand. An international dimension was imparted to the action by the fact that the resumption of the eight-hour-day movement coincided with the reestablishment of the international party of the working class.

On July 14, 1889, the one-hundredth anniversary of the fall of the Bastille in the great French bourgeois revolution of 1789, representatives of the various national workers' organizations met in Paris and established the Second International.

Delegates from the United States presented a report on the eight-hour-day struggle, and the founding congress of the Second International went on record in support of the action set for May 1, 1890, and called for an international demonstration of solidarity on that day.

In the period prior to World War I, with the intensification of the interimperialist rivalries and the exacerbation of the struggle for the division of world markets, spheres of influence, and sources of raw materials, May Day became preeminently an occasion for demonstrations against imperialist war.

If there is any one thing that symbolizes May Day, it is the spirit of class struggle that permeated its origin and development as a working class holiday. Classes, according to Karl Marx, are determined by their relationship to the means of production. Under the so-called free enterprise system of production and distribution, the capitalist class owns the means of production. The working class has only its labor power to sell. To do so, the workers must find a master to purchase the one commodity that the worker has for sale at so much an hour, day, or week, or sometimes, by the piece.

Political parties represent the interests of definite social classes and serve the material interests of those classes. Under our so-called two-party system the cards are stacked against the working class. Both parties are owned and controlled by big business and function in the interests of the bosses. This truth has been known from the very birth of the working class movement in this country. As a matter of fact, the struggle for the eight-hour day, which rapidly became a generalized struggle throughout the whole of the capitalist world, was essentially a political struggle.

From the very beginning, and recurring periodically, the labor movement has engaged in debate over what kind of political policy best serves the interests of labor: class struggle or class collaboration. That is, independent working class political action or the two capitalist political parties.

At its first convention in August 1866, the National Labor Union (NLU) debated the question of independent working class political action versus collaboration with the existing capitalist

parties. It was a lengthy and inconclusive discussion, for even at that time, more than 100 years ago, a controversy over this question was going on in the ranks of labor.

Some argued for remaining in the old capitalist parties, the so-called policy of "boring from within." Others urged the establishment of a labor party separate from and independent of the existing parties. At this first convention of the NLU, supporters of the labor party position were in a clear majority. They adopted the following resolution:

The history and legislation of the past had demonstrated that no confidence whatever can be placed in the pledges of existing political parties so far as the interests of the industrial classes are concerned.

The time has come when the workingmen of the United States should cut themselves aloof from party ties and predilections, and organize themselves into a National Labor Party, the object of which shall be to secure the enactment of a law making eight hours a legal day's work by the national Congress and the several state legislatures, and the election of men pledged to sustain and represent the interests of the industrial classes.

Because of the division over the matter of political policy, the National Labor Union postponed the implementation of the adopted labor party resolution. It was a fatal error—repeated in later years by other labor groups—with almost identical results: failure to carry through to the end a hopeful thrust toward the construction of an independent labor party.

To this day the American working class remains among the very few in the advanced capitalist countries without its own political party. The first step—which requires a decisive break with the fatuous policy of keeping the workers tied to the coattails of capitalist politicians—is yet to be taken.

However, historical necessity keeps driving the working class toward taking that first giant step. The volcanic eruption of the labor movement in the 1930s, which gave rise to the CIO, sparked a number of political innovations—the formation of Labor's Non-Partisan League, the CIO Political Action Committee, the Michigan Commonwealth Federation, the New York American Labor Party, the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party, etc.—but all fell short of the decisive step: a complete, irrevocable break with the parties of capitalism.

The Third International, under Lenin and Trotsky, adopted May Day as its very own and invested its international meaning and tradition with a revolutionary content. But the subsequent degeneration of the Soviet Union under the Stalinist regime poisoned the well of internationalism in all spheres, including that of the May Day tradition.

The torch of revolutionary internationalism passed into the hands of the international Trotskyist Left Opposition, which, in the year 1938, founded the Fourth International on the basis of the "Transitional Program."

One of the major planks in that program invested the slogan of the shorter workday with scientific precision. It calls for a sliding scale of wages and hours in every union contract.

That is, with the advance of technology and the increase of labor productivity, hours should be reduced without a reduction in pay. Today the slogan finds expression in its popular form in the demand for the six-hour day or, as many unionists put it, thirty for forty. That is, thirty hours' work for forty hours' pay.

The sliding scale of wages provides for an automatic increase in wages with each rise in the cost of living. The Socialist Workers Party feels that this demand is the only effective means of combating galloping prices and runaway inflation. It has become popularly known in the union movement as the escalator clause.

At its founding convention in 1938, the Socialist Workers Party adopted the Transitional Program and, later the same year, the slogan for an independent labor party based on the trade unions.

We advocate the formation of such a party with a program including the sliding scale of wages and hours as a prominent plank in order to combat the dual scourge of unemployment and inflation.

The state of Michigan was the scene of some of the most ferocious battles fought during the heyday of the CIO. It was also the scene of one of the most promising steps toward the formation of an independent labor party based on the unions.

This development was described in an article in the September 1, 1944, issue of *American Labor News* entitled "Political Pioneering in Michigan" by Clayton W. Fountain:

Early in 1942, the "labor party" program began to pick up support. There was considerable "labor party" talk within the Wayne County Labor's Non-Partisan League, which carried the political ball for the CIO in Detroit.

Then in the spring of 1943, Wayne County Labor's Non-Partisan League voted to change its name to The Progressive Labor League; and, in the same county convention of the league, there was carried, after prolonged debate, a resolution recommending to the Michigan State CIO Council that the CIO take the initiative in forming an "independent political party."

When the Michigan State CIO Convention met in Detroit in June 1943, the "third party" resolution was an issue of heated controversy. CIO officialdom opposed the "third party" proposal, saying they agreed with it in principle, but that this was not the time. Communists screamed for national unity and denounced the "third party" proposition as a dirty Trotskyist act of sabotage. Finally, after lengthy discussion, both on the convention floor and in hotel rooms, a majority of the delegates voted for a resolution instructing the Michigan State CIO Council to conduct a survey of CIO membership in the state to determine opinion on the issue. The resolution further provided that, if a majority of the CIO members were found to favor a "third party," the State CIO Council was to proceed with the organization of the party.

Early in December, 1943, the Michigan State CIO Council, together with the CIO Regional Office, held a political conference in Lansing, Michigan. At this meeting, the "third partyites" demanded a report on the survey of CIO opinion on "independent political action." The CIO officials' report was unsatisfactory to the "third party" advocates.

The "third party" boys then held a rump meeting and voted to proceed with the formation of an "independent political party." They started out with a committee to "organize a Farmer-Labor Party." After several preliminary meetings, a study conference on the formation of a "third party" was called for the first week in March, 1944. David Lewis of the Canadian CCF [Cooperative Commonwealth Federation] was the key speaker at this study conference. In his remarks, he cautioned against the "labor party" philosophy and stressed the nonsectarian character of the CCF.

"The outcome of the study conference," Fountain concludes, "was a vote to form a 'third party' to be known as the Michigan Commonwealth Federation."

This "compromise" resolution of the debate sounded the death knell of what started out to be the most promising working class independent party development seen in this country. The Michigan Commonwealth Federation ran a slate of six candidates in the 1944 elections but refrained from fielding a candidate for president against Franklin D. Roosevelt, then running for his fourth term.

This experiment in nonclass, "people's party" politics predictably ended in an exasperating exercise in futility.

The hope of building a nonclass, all-inclusive "people's party" mishmash was soon shipwrecked on the rock of reality—the reality that, as Marx established more than 100 years ago, capitalist society is divided into classes; political parties represent the interests of definite social classes in society; the middle classes can play

no independent role; they are driven to support either one or the other of the two basic classes, the workers or the capitalists. History has confirmed this thesis over and over again.

May Day represents in its true essence a task posed by history for the American working class going back to the time this country consummated its first revolution—the first American revolution of 1776, which brought the capitalist class to power.

Today the two-hundredth anniversary of that event is commemorated with the great American working class still to achieve its historic goal of building its own mass political party, able to conquer state power and rule in its own name. This is still the key task on the road to establishing a new, socialist society that will end once and for all the existence of poverty, color and sex discrimination, deprivation, and despair in the midst of potential plenty and full equality for all. □

Become a Labor Party Advocate!

An Invitation from Tony Mazzocchi, Secretary-Treasurer, Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers International Union

I would like to invite you to become a Charter Member with me of a new organization to be called, simply, Labor Party Advocates.

For the past ten years, I have openly declared my belief that unless the trade union movement in this country seizes the political initiative and organizes a Labor Party, it will never again be the force it once was.

The response to my call for a Labor Party has always been enthusiastic. Nevertheless, I have hesitated actually to undertake organizing such an effort until it was absolutely clear that we had no alternative.

Today, it is clear. We have no alternative.

For the last fifty years, the labor movement has been trying to pressure the two

major parties, especially the Democrats, to adopt a more pro-worker agenda. Millions of dollars, thousands of volunteer hours, and hundreds of endorsements later, what do we have to show for our efforts? Very little.

Admittedly, there is a handful of labor Democrats who are genuine friends of the trade union movement and of working people. However, they are without any real influence in their own party.

The people who actually call the shots in the Democratic and Republican parties long ago gave up even pretending to represent the interests of working people.

After all, why pay any attention to a trade union president when a two-bit savings-and-loan executive like Thomas Keating can promise to donate \$100,000 at a pop to your campaign fund?

Enough is enough. The bosses have two parties. We should have at least one. It is time for the labor movement in this

country to organize its own independent party of working people.

If you agree with me, then I invite you to sign up as a Labor Party Advocate.

Labor Party Advocates has a single purpose: to organize a Labor Party in the United States. It will neither run nor endorse candidates for political office. But it will agitate for a new economic, social, and political agenda for working people. And it will serve as an organizing committee for a new Labor Party.

Brothers and sisters, the world is changing rapidly, and history is knocking on our door. Let us answer the call.

It is the time for boldness. The future of our families, our communities, and our unions depends upon us acting now.

[For more information on Labor Party Advocates and/or to become one, write: Labor Party Advocates, c/o Tony Mazzocchi, 94 Linden Lane, Princeton, NJ 08540.]

Rail (Continued from page 12)

by mandating that almost every dispute arising as a result of these recommendations be sent to binding arbitration for resolution.

As a result of railroad deregulation throughout the 1980s, the privately owned U.S. railroads were permitted to abandon vast sections of railroad (mostly built originally with public funds), deunionize about 25 percent of the rail workforce, and obtain record profits. Rail employment was cut in half from 1980-1990 while freight tonnage rose to all-time highs.

When Richard Kilroy, the president of the Transportation Communications Union (TCU) and chief spokesperson for the rail unions, expressed the opinion on January 15 that rail labor could live with the PEB recommendations, and that in any case the unions were too patriotic to strike during a war, TCU lodges around the country passed resolutions demanding Kilroy retract his position.

By February 1, Kilroy had reversed himself and claimed he was "misquoted," now saying the PEB was "completely unaccep-

table." However, his original position was his real one, and it is evident that Kilroy's current strategy is to call a phony strike as soon after April 17 (the expiration date for the "cooling-off" period) as possible and thus provide Congress with a pretext for intervening and imposing the PEB recommendations without discussion, thus circumventing the right of rail workers to decide for themselves and allowing the bureaucrats to claim they opposed the settlement.

The longer-term perspective of the rail union bureaucrats, which they share with the carriers, is to carry out a bureaucratic top-down merger of the rail unions into a single union which can hopefully provide jobs for all the current bureaucrats and maintain amicable relations with the carriers. The carriers, who historically were opposed to one big rail union, now see their interests as better served by abolishing the ten craft-based rail unions and removing a major obstacle to their goal of doing away with craft and job rules and restrictions on "management prerogatives." The top

union bureaucrats have obediently fallen into line.

The fate of rail workers in the immediate period ahead will turn on their ability to build up an effective grassroots rank-and-file movement against the PEB recommendations that can force the carriers, the politicians, and the union bureaucrats to retreat. If it cannot be done in time, the new and inferior wages and conditions will only create further determination on the part of rail workers to reorder their organizations and reclaim their rights. Whether or not any short-term gains can be registered, rail workers will remain a crucial component of the working class, located in an industry that is absolutely decisive to the functioning of a modern industrial society, and capable of exercising great economic and political power. Radicalization and independent activity among rail workers will continue to deepen and find new expression regardless of the immediate outcome of this crisis. □

The Struggle for Independent Unionism

Rank-and-File Rebellion: Teamsters for a Democratic Union, by Dan La Botz. Verso, New York/London, 1990. 336 pp., \$18.95.

Reviewed by Frank Lovell

This is a rare book, a book that may well be used and remembered by working people in the years immediately ahead. It tells the story of Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU), how it was organized and what it intends to do. And along the way it tells quite a lot about the history of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT). Best of all it is structured so as to make it easily managed by those who like to go back to an incident mentioned in an earlier section, or remind a friend of a shared experience in the union or on the job that is now recorded for everyone to know about. It is also exciting reading.

A Foreword by Victor Reuther, designed to prepare the reader for the unexpected, says: "Most other books on the Teamsters have concentrated on the Mafia and on the union's top leadership; they have focused on corruption and scandal in the union. This is one of the few books on the modern Teamsters union that puts the ordinary worker, the honest hard-working rank-and-file union member at the center of attention. The men and women described in the pages of this book, the men and women who drive trucks, work in warehouses, and cut vegetables in frozen food plants, have begun to build a movement not only to take back their union but to make it a force for progressive social change in America."

Everyone who entertains hopes of progressive social change here and throughout the world will find this book a source of encouragement, but it will appeal most to working members of the Teamsters union. This is the audience it was written for. It is easy to imagine over-the-road drivers at a truck stop thumbing through the pages to find mention of a driver they all know, or to go over again the section that tells about how the local that collected their dues for years finally kicked out the old company-minded officials. Or warehouse workers repeating to each other the stories of fights and firings remembered and reported here in this book, all about the time when their local was run by the mob and good guys were beaten on the job.

Scenes of this kind will owe much to the careful structuring of the book, arranged

for ready reference to specific incidents and highly publicized developments in the Teamsters union since the 1930s and before. Six parts are the girders or skeletal frame: 1) origins of the reform movement, consisting of struggles against gangsterism in the 1970s prior to the founding of TDU; 2) Teamster bureaucracy, the rise of the union in the 1930s and its decline in the post-World War II years; 3) the making of the genuine opposition movement, the process through which TDU established itself; 4) testing TDU, the crucial struggles of the 1980s; 5) fighting back, the turn-around within the Teamsters which began in 1982 with the revolt of local union presidents in the United Parcel Service (UPS) division of IBT against then general president Roy Williams; 6) the party of reform, program and present goals of TDU.

Each of these six parts is made up of separate segments dealing with specific strikes, historic turning points, and memorable highlights in the effort to establish a viable class struggle caucus in the Teamsters union. Included among these segments, where appropriate, are thumbnail sketches of some of the men and women who have helped build TDU, many of them presently part of its leadership. This is an effective device. It helps readers to learn about the people who founded and are building TDU, to know that all of them were working teamsters (or spouses) and that women and African-Americans and Latinos and other minorities are prominent in the leadership. This tells a great deal about the kind of organization TDU is.

'Not Big-Mouthed, Militant Airheads'

One of these sketches is autobiographical, a letter from Sarah Bequette who tells how she happened to join TDU and why she decided to serve on the International Steering Committee (ISC). ("Would this ever happen in the IBT?," she asks.) Sarah describes herself as a homemaker. She and her husband, an over-the-road driver, live in Madison County, Illinois, near St. Louis. He persuaded her to attend a TDU function in 1984 where she met Ken Paff, the national organizer. Sarah was favorably impressed with Ken and other TDU leaders. "They were not big-mouthed, militant airheads wearing chain-drive wallets and combat boots, but caring, intelligent human beings." After becoming active in TDU she accepted to be a member of its

ISC because "women generally have a special intuition, a uniquely different perspective than men, in handling problems or handling decisions, but are timid about expressing that opinion." She says "this is especially true if she is the minority in a group of mostly men. Yet, her input is valuable in that it may help to bring about a better solution or plan. It may be the difference." Bequette helped prepare and implement TDU's response to the drug-testing problem in the trucking industry. She is not typical because none of these people who are dedicated to TDU at this stage of its development are typical. All are individuals with their own contributions. They are bound together by their determination to clean up their union and force the employers to abide by the written terms of union contracts.

TDU Founded

On September 18, 1976, at Kent State University in Ohio 200 working Teamsters from 15 states across the country attended the TDU founding convention. They were not novices. They knew what they were there for. All had been active in the growing opposition to the corrupt Teamster bureaucracy. Many were prominent in their local unions, widely known as courageous fighters. Some bore the scars of battle. The university surroundings afforded some protection against hired thugs, but a picket line led by Jackie Presser who was then head of the Ohio Teamsters and a vice president of IBT showed up as an intimidating reminder to the delegates that they were known and tailed.

The organizers of the convention had the foresight to invite a few lawyers who had previously volunteered their time to help democratize the Teamsters union. A resolution was adopted to establish a network of lawyers to help TDU members fight for their rights, adding "we understand that our success will be based on the size, strength, and awareness of our movement." This was no afterthought, simply the restatement of a basic lesson learned from experience.

Two other resolutions established the character of TDU. One declared it to be a national organization and provided for local chapters. The other denounced and proscribed all forms of discrimination. And when the first 15-member National Steering Committee was elected it included two African-Americans and two women.

The constitution defined TDU's purpose as a caucus within the International Brotherhood of Teamsters: "the aim of this organization is to build a national, unified movement. . . . We aim to bring the Teamsters union back to the membership. We do not advocate secession from the Teamsters union, or 'Dual Unionism' in any form whatsoever."

From that time forward TDU grew steadily, learning valuable lessons as it developed through mergers with other opposition groups and in struggles against employer interference and government intervention. Fourteen years later it could boast a membership of 10,000 within the 1.6-million-member IBT. These ten thousand TDU members are a well organized and battle-seasoned army. Every year they elect convention delegates, take stock of what they have accomplished, and try to anticipate what lies ahead. They have made allies and expanded their theoretical understanding to include a vision of the role that a transformed union movement in this country can play in the restructuring of this predatory society. This understanding is nurtured through persistent education. La Botz writes that "TDU workshops have provided the activists and local leaders with intensive education, so that they return home more effective in their organizing work." But this education is not restricted by a narrow concept of "organizing." A much broader understanding is revealed in the following paragraph from the closing segment in the book, TDU's record of achievement:

The labor movement has never been effective without the assistance and involvement of professionals, technicians, and other intellectuals. TDU has recognized this and has brought to its meetings and conventions labor educators, labor lawyers, occupational safety and health physicians, and labor historians who can give the rank-and-file union members a broader outlook not only on their own union, but also on the place of their union in the labor movement. It is because of this kind of activity over a period of thirteen years that the rank-and-file Teamster has become more sophisticated and more solidarity-conscious. TDU, both locally and nationally, has supported other unions in their struggles, from the Professional Air Traffic Controllers and Greyhound drivers to United Food and Commercial Workers Local P-9 and striking Blue Cross workers. TDU has supported not only Teamsters in Canada and Puerto Rico but also workers in Poland and South Africa in their struggles for union democracy.

Independent Unionism

The struggle for independent unionism—that is, unions controlled by the workers they claim to represent and independent of the destructive influence of the employers and the government—is integral to the history of the union movement. In order to survive unions must struggle continuously to retain their independence. This struggle has frequently taken the organizational form of an opposition caucus seeking to rid a particular union or unions in one industry of company-minded officials and their political friends. At times the opposition to the entrenched union bureaucracy has become, or consciously tried to become, a progressive reform movement seeking to transform the union movement. In some respects TDU is suggestive of previous efforts to build a broad-based progressive caucus.

One such predecessor was the Trade Union Educational League which originated from a revolutionary program drafted in 1913 by William Z. Foster, based on his experiences in France and what he had learned from French syndicalism at the time. The program was soon rewritten to become compatible with the organizational needs of the AFL unions prior to World War I. Foster went on to organize the Chicago stockyards under AFL auspices and led the 1919 steel strike in an attempt to organize the steel industry. When Foster joined the early Communist Party the Trade Union Educational League then became the organizational structure for a broad left wing in the unions. But the advent of Stalinism destroyed it and the CP too in 1928, before Foster and most others in the reform union movement knew what had happened.

Another early reform movement began with the Brookwood Labor College founded by A. J. Muste and financed in part by union contributions. It educated and trained union activists in the 1920s and early 1930s. Brookwood graduates and others associated with the college organized the Conference for Progressive Labor Action and helped form opposition caucuses in the old AFL unions. The *Save the Union* movement in the United Mine Workers in 1927 against the dictatorial machine of John L. Lewis was identified with John Brophy (candidate against Lewis for UMW president) and Powers Hapgood, both Brookwood associates.

In 1929 a manifesto was published in the newspaper *Labor Age* proclaiming the need for a broad progressive labor movement to undertake to organize the unorganized, establish industrial unions, fight for union democracy, independent political action, the five-day week, social insurance, and other needs of the time. This was one

of the early precursors of the still-to-come industrial unions, the CIO movement. It too was strongly influenced by Brookwood.

After the victorious 1934 Minneapolis Teamster strikes the leadership sought to develop a broad left wing that would transform the labor movement, similarly as envisioned in the *Labor Age* manifesto. Farrell Dobbs, in his *Teamster Power* (the second of his four-book series on the Minneapolis Teamster movement) describes the first attempt to launch an organization for this purpose in April 1935:

At that time a formal structure was initiated known as the Northwest Labor Unity Conference (NLUC). . . . The new left-wing formation duplicated nothing. . . . It did nothing to disturb the existing unity of the movement. Organizational affiliation was not permitted; unionists could join the NLUC only as individuals. Its sole objective was to aid all workers' organizations in making labor unity more meaningful and productive. This key aim was pinpointed in its central slogan: "*All workers into the unions. All unions into the struggle.*"

The NLUC elected a continuations committee, voted to establish a local branch of Non-Partisan Labor Defense (a newly formed national legal defense organization), and decided to publish a weekly tabloid called *Northwest Organizer*. It became a popular union publication and gained wide circulation. But this organized left wing never extended beyond the Northwest area where it was effective in combating the influence of IBT president Tobin's business unionism, and *did* succeed in helping local unions to implement class struggle policies.

Membership in NLUC, of course, was not limited to Teamsters. Frank Ellis, leader of the successful organization of packinghouse workers at the Hormel plant in Austin, Minnesota, was a founder of NLUC, a member of its continuations committee.

With the rise of the CIO movement in Michigan and throughout the Midwest NLUC was unable to establish a working relationship with the militant leaders of the CIO sitdown strikes in 1937. It became one of the early victims of government command of the unions during World War II.

Following the war left-wing unionism was under severe attack during the "McCarthy era" of the 1950s, but local struggles for union democracy continued to flare up. Late in 1959 the publication *Union Democracy in Action*, edited by Herman Benson, began to record some of these struggles and rally support for them. It publicized the battles of rank-and-file

members of the Machinists union in St. Louis against the dictatorship of a company-minded union officialdom, the running fight of members in the National Maritime Union to dislodge a gang of crooks that had seized and held control of the union through collusion with the U. S. Coast Guard, and the sometimes partially successful local campaigns to clean up the Painters union in New York, California, District of Columbia, and Minnesota. Later Benson helped expose and publicize the murder of Jock Yablonski, the reform-minded UMW official, and hailed the Miners For Democracy movement that succeeded in 1972 in electing a new president and establishing democratic procedures in the election of officials. In 1976 Benson helped publicize the Ed Sadlowski Fight Back campaign for president of the Steelworkers union against the complacent class-collaborationist bureaucracy. In these struggles of the miners and steelworkers Benson and his staff participated by helping to raise money and organize legal defense. But he was only the outraged editor of a crusading publication, not an organized sector of the union movement. The causes he endorsed and struggles he recorded over three decades, in which heroic battles were waged and lives lost, never extended beyond the particular union involved. Nor did any of them survive long after the decisive battle ended, regardless of the outcome.

The TDU is different. It is undoubtedly true that the long history of opposition struggles in the union movement has left a heritage from which TDU today benefits. But TDU is unprecedented in that there has never before been a broad-based reform organization that holds annual conventions, publishes regularly a monthly national newspaper, is structured on local chapters throughout the country, elects all local and national officials, maintains fulltime organizing staffs in several regions, has a consistent record of struggle over a 14-year period, and 10,000 members.

The Brotherhood

The unique history of the Teamsters union has contributed decisively to the rise and character of TDU. In *Rank-and-File Rebellion* the history of the Teamsters union necessarily receives once-over-lightly treatment with the result that many crucial developments in the transformation of the union following the Minneapolis strikes (realized through the organization of the over-the-road drivers) are compressed or omitted. In describing Hoffa's role and his relation to the Minneapolis movement, for example, La Botz draws heavily on *The Hoffa Wars: Teamsters,*

Rebels, Politicians and the Mob by Dan E. Moldea.

It seems to me, however, that for the purposes of supplying necessary historical background to the current wars in the Teamsters union, La Botz's basic assessments of the social and political forces that shaped the union after 1934 are valid. The growing importance of the auto industry in the U.S. economy in the late 1920s and the network of public financed state highways created the modern trucking industry, and this in turn forced the Teamsters union to modernize. Otherwise the union would not have survived.

Kingpins of Ruin

Daniel J. Tobin was International president of the union almost from its inception until his retirement in 1952. His understanding of unionism and appreciation of his position in the union movement did not change much over the years. The men in charge of IBT city and district councils adapted to the new conditions of the industry, introduced new organizational forms and methods of operation, and kept Tobin on because it served their purposes to do so.

Dave Beck who succeeded Tobin as president came to the job with a business mentality. He tried to administer the affairs of the union as if it were a business. He was the personification of "business unionism," and had to leave his union post and go to prison for a short stay because of shady business dealings.

James R. Hoffa took over as International president of the IBT in 1957 at the union's convention in Miami Beach, Florida. But Hoffa was then under a cloud of racketeering charges from the U.S. government's McClellan Committee investigations. He received permission from a federal judge to hold office under the supervision of a board of monitors approved by the court.

La Botz summarizes the contributions of these three union presidents most closely identified with degeneration of the union:

The process had begun long before: in the early days, President Daniel J. Tobin turned a blind eye to corruption in the big city locals like New York and Chicago. Later, in the 1950s, President Dave Beck enriched himself at the expense of the union and its members. Jimmy Hoffa, the idol of the dock workers and truck drivers and the man who negotiated their freight contract, betrayed their trust when he brought the Mafia into the union.

In a later section of the book La Botz elaborates:

So it was that under Tobin, Beck and Hoffa the Teamsters union had become the corrupt, bureaucratic institution it was in 1976 when TDU began, dominated by the Mafia, manipulated by the government and collaborating with the companies. Contrary to myth, the corruption of the Teamsters was not due to the fact that Jimmy Hoffa had invited the Mafia into the union. The union had been perverted from its original purpose because along the way Tobin, Beck and Hoffa had come to accommodate the employers, adapting to the values of the employers, and to the employers' sense of who should run things. Teamster leaders might strike for higher wages, but they accepted absolutely the right of the employers to run their companies, of businessmen in general to dominate the economy, of the corporate elite to control politics, and of the business ethic of competition to pervade society. They conceded to business the right to set the rules of the game and to deal the cards, and labor would be content to play the hand it was dealt, even if it was dealt from the bottom of the deck.

The history of the Teamsters union might have taken a different course if the organizational methods introduced by the Minneapolis Teamster movement had prevailed. La Botz presents the choice:

The industrial union approach initiated by Dobbs and used by Beck brought hundreds of thousands of new members into the union, which reached a membership of over half a million in 1941. However, at the same time that the Teamsters union was making such great strides, a struggle for the future of the organization was developing, essentially a struggle between Farrell Dobbs's brand of radical, democratic unionism from-the-bottom-up, and Dave Beck's conservative, authoritarian unionism from-the-top-down. The future of the Teamsters union would be determined by the outcome of that struggle.

Teamster Democracy Destroyed

The outcome of that struggle was determined by forces outside the Teamsters union. In a segment headed "Tobin and Roosevelt Destroy the Movement" La Botz explains:

When World War II broke out in Europe in 1939, it became increasingly clear that Roosevelt would bring the United States into the war on the side of Great Britain and France. Tobin, an ardent supporter of Roosevelt, would

back him and his war policy. But the Teamster chief was aware that the Minneapolis Teamster leaders had altogether different ideas. As socialists, Dobbs and the other Minneapolis Teamster leaders opposed what they considered an imperialist war to divide the world among various capitalist powers, Germany and Italy on the one hand and Great Britain and France on the other. The Trotskyist Teamster activists in Minneapolis felt that working people had nothing to gain from supporting such a war, and should instead work to bring about a socialist society. At the same time, the Minneapolis Teamsters refused to relinquish the right to strike, even during wartime.

These differences not only put the socialist Teamster leaders at odds with Tobin but also led the Roosevelt administration to consider them dangerous political opponents. By early 1941 Tobin decided that the time had come to eliminate the Minneapolis radicals.

Tobin must have been prompted by Roosevelt because soon thereafter the federal government raided the socialist headquarters and arrested 29 leaders of the SWP and Teamsters union, charging them with "seditious conspiracy." This resulted in the famous Minneapolis labor case, the first "Smith Act trial." It also resulted in the destruction of the promising left-wing movement for democratic unionism and what La Botz calls "the fall of the Teamsters."

These are all critical judgment calls: that "business unionism" undermined and weakened the union from the start, that a liberating struggle developed through the Minneapolis strike actions to democratize the union and free it from the corrupting influence of the employers, and that this conflict was resolved in favor of the employers by government intervention. From these postulates the details of the struggle fall into place and the true outline of the modern history of the Teamsters union emerges. Anticipating that readers may find aspects of the struggle missing or distorted in this highlighted history of the union, the author/editors have added a "selected bibliography" of more than 50 titles.

Government Intervention

Recent developments in Teamster union history are tied to intervention of the federal government. In March 1989 the U.S. Justice Department agreed with top union officials (IBT general president William J. McCarthy and the General Executive Board) to drop criminal actions under the Racketeer-Influenced Corrupt Or-

ganizations Act (RICO) in exchange for government involvement in union affairs for the next several years to ensure that all ties between union and mob are severed. TDU claims credit for the favorable terms of this agreement (without assuming responsibility for it or agreeing to abide by all the conditions of it) which mandate the election of all top officials by referendum of the general membership. La Botz reports the details:

It was the elections themselves that TDU believes to be the most important feature of the agreement. The IBT's constitution was to be changed so that all delegates to IBT conventions beginning in 1991 will be directly elected by rank-and-file balloting shortly before the convention (not more than six months before, except for those delegates elected during fall 1990 local union elections). This means that local union officers, many of whom have also been union employees, will no longer automatically be delegates.

The nominations for International officers will be made at the convention, with support by 5 percent of the delegates voting by secret ballot necessary to secure nomination. The general president, secretary-treasurer and all sixteen International vice-presidents will be elected within four to six months after the convention. The election will be by direct rank-and-file vote conducted through in-person, ballot-box voting at local unions, or by absentee ballots where necessary. Five vice-presidents will be elected at-large, while eleven are to be elected by members in the respective conferences, with the Canadian Conference receiving one vice-president; the Southern and Western Conferences two vice-presidents each; and the Eastern and Central Conferences three vice-presidents each.

La Botz also reports the response of TDU. "TDU organizer Ken Paff told the April 1, 1989, meeting of TDU's International Steering Committee that 'the court order was largely shaped by our views. I think we can take enormous pride in steering the settlement away from government trusteeship and toward the right to vote.'"

Winning the right to vote in IBT took many battles and a long time, and it certainly is an enormous achievement. TDU's role in the 1991 Teamster union elections and its relation to the new officialdom that will be responsible for conducting union affairs can be judged by the way it decided to endorse the candidacy of Ron Carey for general president and its relation to the Carey campaign committee.

Ron Carey for President

Carey, president of New York Local 804 (UPS workers) for more than 20 years, announced his candidacy for general president of the Teamsters in September 1989. He then went before the TDU convention in November to seek endorsement. He had never joined TDU although he was in agreement with the basic thrust of its program to democratize the union, and had collaborated with TDU in the UPS contract fights. When asked why he had never joined TDU he said, "I'm a Teamster who believes in democracy for our union, and I'm here to get the support of other rank-and-file Teamsters."

The TDU convention debated whether to endorse Carey, hesitating because many delegates had been fooled by candidates who promised to deliver everything the membership wanted and did nothing after being elected. They argued that organization and education of the union membership to keep constant watch on the officialdom and guard democratic rights is more important than electing officials to do the work that can be done only by an alert and vigilant membership. In the end they agreed that endorsing Carey and continuing the necessary work of transforming the union could be compatible. This augurs well for the future of both IBT and TDU.

Danger Signals

The future is fraught with pitfalls, mostly dug in the political field which is controlled by the employers and their representatives in the Republican and Democratic parties. The entire history of the IBT serves as a warning. Tobin was an ardent Democrat, a member of the party's national committee and a heavy contributor from the union treasury to party coffers, not because he was enamored of the principles of democracy. He knew that the Democratic Party has nothing to do with democracy. His mistake was in thinking that Roosevelt was a friend of the union movement and that the Democratic Party would serve the needs of the Teamsters union. But Tobin's instinct was right on target. The Democratic Party did benefit the Teamster bureaucracy and contributed heavily to the corruption of the union. Dave Beck shared Tobin's instinct and figured out that two political friends are better than one. So he curried favor with the Republicans as well as Democrats, having learned this wonderful wisdom from his associates in the business world where it is a first principle of demonstrable worth. But between the Democrats and Republicans Beck got crossed up and found himself in jail and out of the union. Hoffa hoped the Republicans would help him stay out but that was a false

(Continued on page 36)

The Meech Lake Accord, which was to recognize Québec as a "distinct society" in the context of a Canadian state while denying its right to independence, required acceptance by all ten Canadian provinces. It failed in June 1990 when two of the provinces voted against it. Barry Weisleder is a leading member of Socialist Challenge/Gauche Socialiste, Canadian section of the Fourth International.

A Battle for Québec's Self-Determination

by Barry Weisleder

Since the failure of the Meech Lake Accord last summer, the seeming inevitability of Québec independence has been accepted with rare equanimity, generally speaking, by the population of English Canada.

That is, only generally speaking.

Very notable exceptions are the members of the English Canadian corporate elite, whose pronouncements attain a volume and frequency highly disproportionate to their small numbers. Through their pervasive media, their well-bought politicians and the instruments of government, the federalist bourgeoisie is already campaigning hard against Québec's demands.

But this is a relatively sophisticated campaign which operates simultaneously on many levels. There are citizens' commissions traveling the country (Keith Spicer's rickety roadshow), and some provinces (Ontario and Manitoba) are conducting their own mobile hearings.

Newspaper editorialists and radio talk-show hosts regularly invite comment and debate. Universities publicize learned lectures on the future of Canada.

But the response has been many decibels less than deafening. This is true notwithstanding the apoplexy of the rich and famous at the prospect of losing over one-quarter of the markets and resources now jealously guarded by their confederal state.

The familiar scene at public hearings and debates on the constitutional crisis in English Canada is the presence of aboriginal peoples' representatives who demand native self-government (and who are treated to official sympathy), a growing number of antiwar activists who express their concerns for the future of humanity (and who are told they are off-topic), and the extreme fringe anglo-chauvinists who market their anti-bilingualism as a sure cure for cancer and most social maladies.

Sensing that "the danger of Québec separatism" hasn't sufficiently motivated broad masses too preoccupied by imperialist war in the Persian Gulf and economic recession at home, Prime Minister Mulroney set out, on February 12 and 13, to stir the pot and infuse a sense of urgency.

The commercial press was elated. The *Globe and Mail's* Jeffrey Simpson rhapsodized, "At last: a speech on Canada worthy of a Canadian prime minister."

Particularly popular with bourgeois commentators was the turn of phrase, "Watch out for the dream merchants [referring to proponents of Québec independence], who say it's no problem to destroy a great country and rebuild it later." Behind this thin veil is the threat of economic warfare, and ruin, aimed primarily at Québec's working people, the vast majority of its electors.

Just so that there was no room for misunderstanding that this was his response to the Québec Liberal Party's Allaire Report, Mulroney told the patrons of the Empire and Canadian clubs in Toronto, "We have every intention of restructuring Canada. We have absolutely no intention of dismantling it."

Or of letting anyone else dismantle it?

The Allaire Report, completed under Québec Premier Bourassa's personal supervision, would give Québec exclusive jurisdiction over twenty-two areas, including environment, education, and language. It proposes sharing power with Ottawa in nine areas, among them foreign policy, taxation, and justice. It would leave the federal government with exclusive control over just five areas: defense, equalization payments, monetary policies, customs, and debt management. The report also calls for abolition of the Senate.

While English Canadian politicians denounce the Allaire recommendations as outrageously unreasonable and excessive, in Québec they are widely considered as less than minimal.

The Belanger-Campeau Commission, due to report to the Québec National Assembly in a few weeks, will recommend no less, and probably more. The English Canadian elite's anticipated rejection of these demands will be the prelude to a referendum on Québec sovereignty. But the former will not give up Québec without a fight, and judging by a War Measures Act history of Canada in the 20th century, it will get dirty—very dirty.

How can working people in English Canada avoid the traps our rulers are preparing for us?

First of all, we should recognize that Québec is not insisting on the devolution of all powers to the provinces. Québec is not a province like the others; it is an oppressed nation that is striving for sovereignty.

The people of the English Canadian provinces and territories need a central government, preferably a workers' government, with the capacity and desire to implement policies in their interests. They don't need to keep Québec and indigenous peoples as slaves or hostages of the present state structure to realize their needs. To the contrary, as Karl Marx warned the English about Ireland over a century ago, "A people that oppresses another will never itself be free."

So, Québec self-determination, up to and including independence, does not equal a program for total decentralization (and further deregulation, privatization, and social cutbacks).

It means two states, which should enter into relations as equals, without threats or indemnities.

And the second imperative, if we are to avoid being overwhelmed by the destructive chauvinism our rulers are trying to stimulate, is that workers in English Canada must be active proponents of Québec self-determination. Our unions, women's and minority rights organizations, and other social movements have a particular responsibility to lead in this effort.

This necessitates a break with passivity, and a struggle against the pro-federalist, pro-state bias of the leadership of the labor movement and its political party, the New Democratic Party.

Ontario NDP Premier Bob Rae's recent insistence that Ontario would not allow Québec to negotiate a new constitutional arrangement with Ottawa alone, as Bourassa says the Québec government intends to do, is a poisonous, anti-worker policy that NDP members must reject.

Clearly there's much work to be done—before the Canadian bourgeoisie can manufacture a social base for its campaign to keep oppressed nations, workers, and everyone else in line. □

[The following introductory notes and remarks by Ernest Mandel were translated from the French manuscript for the *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism* by Stuart Brown.]

Ernest Mandel in Moscow

*On January 18, in Moscow, at the headquarters of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, the Russian edition of the magazine **Socialism of the Future** was presented to the media. It is a theoretical journal published by the Spanish, Italian, French, and German Social Democratic parties, bringing together in a pluralist forum representatives of various currents in the international workers' movement. The directors and editorial staff include in particular Mikhail Gorbachev; Zdenek Mlynar, the former general secretary of the Czechoslovak Communist Party during the period of the Prague Spring; Adam Schaff, Polish Marxist expelled from the Communist Party during the 1980s; Ota Sik; Andre Gorz; Ralph Miliband; and Ernest Mandel, representing the Fourth International.*

At this news conference, the journal was represented by Adam Schaff (initiator of the magazine), a member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the USSR CP, Ernest Mandel, and Zdenek Mlynar.

The importance of this event lies in the fact that, for the first time since the expulsion of the Left Opposition in 1927-28, the Trotskyist political current as such is recognized in the USSR as a real and legitimate part of the workers' movement. This constitutes a step forward in the context of a renewed recognition of the importance of Trotsky's role in the history of the Soviet Union—and a step forward in the publication of his writings. Mandel demanded in his comments not only that all the writings of Trotsky and the principal leaders of the Soviet Left Opposition be published in the USSR, but also the main works by representatives of the Fourth International.

*During his trip to Moscow, Mandel was given a long interview concerning Trotsky, Trotskyism, and the Fourth International by the weekly publication, **Argumenti i Fakti**, which has the largest circulation of any newsweekly in the world: almost 30 million copies. The theoretical review, **Dialog**, which prints 400,000 copies, published an article by him concerning the organization of a democratic, self-managed, planned economy, in opposition to both the despotism of capitalist wealth and the despotism of the state. Mandel gave several lectures at scientific institutions and met with representatives of the principal left organizations in Moscow.*

We print here the text of the comments made by Ernest Mandel before the Soviet media:

Dear Friends and Comrades,

The Fourth International, in whose name I speak today, continues the fight of Lev Davidovich Trotsky and the other militants of the Left Opposition against bureaucratism and Stalinism, against capitalism, imperialism, and fascism. We pursue the struggle for emancipation and for direct democracy which inspired the October revolution. Stalin considered the Opposition to be his principal enemy. He assassinated all of its militants, practically without exception. He assassinated a million communists using the pretext of Trotskyism or of an alliance with Trotskyism. These are the crimes of counterrevolution, not the product of revolution.

Today, the historical truth about Trotsky and the Opposition is coming to light. This work, of moral and political importance, must be completed. We demand of the USSR's judicial authorities that they lift from Trotsky and his son Leon Sedov all the infamous accusations made against them as part of the verdict of the first Moscow trial in 1936. We demand that all the works of Trotsky and of other spokespeople of the Opposition be pub-

lished in the USSR, as well as the principal writings by representatives of the Fourth International.

As a citizen of a country occupied by German imperialism in May 1940, as a militant from the first hours of the popular antifascist resistance in my country, as a former prisoner of the Nazi camps, I consider it my duty to express here my recognition of and admiration for the indomitable courage of the Soviet army and the citizens and peoples of the Soviet Union, and for all the workers of Moscow, of Leningrad, and of besieged Stalingrad. Thanks to their heroic resistance the attempt at world domination by German imperialism under the Nazis failed. All humanity owes an eternal debt to these heroes and heroines. Hitler wanted to exterminate 100 million people in Central and Eastern Europe. There would have been additional millions in Africa and Asia if he had been able to break the resistance of the USSR. It is above all the Soviet Union which foiled this bloody and barbaric project.

The activities of the Soviet workers between 1941 and 1944 are the material and moral product of the October socialist

revolution. Here that revolution finds an incontestable historic justification. But the bureaucrats who usurped and monopolized power from 1923—who suffocated the real power of the Soviets, who strangled democracy within the Communist Party and the trade unions in order to defend their exorbitant material privileges—undermined and discredited the work of this great revolution.

They discredited it with their monstrous crimes against the communists, the workers, the peasants, the oppressed nationalities of the USSR, against the peoples of Eastern Europe, against the workers of many countries. They undermined it by suffocating the creative initiative of the masses and of the intellectuals, by a generalized irresponsibility and indifference in the economy. The failure of their "command economy" is obvious today for all to see. The economic, social, political, moral crisis which results is extremely grave.

Faced with this crisis, some call for the privatization of industry as the only possible alternative. They assert likewise that, without the predominance of the private sector, personal liberty, a state based on

law, and democratic freedoms for the masses and for nationalities cannot be guaranteed. However, the experience of the capitalist world demonstrates that when private property is predominant, the great majority of working men and women are subject to the despotism of the wealthy. This is no less serious than the despotism of the state.

The masses must, under these circumstances, submit to chronic or conjunctural unemployment, to the periodic lowering of wages, to material and moral misery as a result of decisions over which they have no control, which are imposed behind their backs.

There are today, in those countries considered rich, 40 million unemployed. This will grow to 50 million during the course of the economic crisis which has already begun. More than 100 million live in poverty.

In the capitalist countries of the third world there are more than 100 million unemployed and a billion living in poverty.

The attempt to impose a regime of private property in Poland has already brought about a 35 percent lowering of real wages, a grave decline in production, and a crushing poverty.

The politics of Reagan and of Mrs. Thatcher have produced in the United States and in Great Britain a graver economic crisis than in other countries. The gap between rich and poor has increased without letup during the last decade.

On a worldwide scale, this gap has grown even more. Between 1980 and 1988 the per capita income went down, in an absolute sense, in 62 countries totaling 808 million inhabitants. In Africa it is 50 times lower than in the USA. And it is certain that if the Soviet economy becomes privatized, the USSR will become a third world country, not a Sweden or a Finland.

As the masses resist, sooner or later, against these abominations through their struggles—including with big strikes—the defenders of private property will have to use repression, restrictions on democratic liberties, just like open dictatorial regimes, in order to protect free enterprise. Private economy and the rights of men and women are, therefore, opposed to one another; they are far from mutually reinforcing each other.

Faced with these two dictatorships—of the state and of great capitalist wealth—we, socialists of the Fourth International, defend a third path: one of a collective, self-managed, and democratically planned economy.

The meaning of this can be summed up in the idea that the masses of producers/consumers decide for them-

selves—after a democratic, public, open, pluralist debate—the broad priorities of what should be produced, how it should be produced, and how it should be distributed. The decisions on economic management should be imposed neither by the state nor by the market, but made consciously and democratically by the people themselves.

When we say “collective economy” we do not mean “state economy.” We mean the power to make decisions resting in the hands of the producers/consumers. This means that one part of the product remains at the disposition of the workers of each enterprise; another part goes to the citizens of each municipality, of each region, of each nationality, and to the country as a whole. But the decisions must be coordinated, and therefore planned—by industrial branch, by commune, by nationality, in the entire country—through democratic bodies elected from below.

This third path is not only more democratic than the dictatorship of the state or the dictatorship of wealth, it is also more efficient. It liberates an immense creative capacity, not only for a small minority of independent entrepreneurs (which only makes up a small percentage of the population in the West) but for the great majority. They will sense, finally—convinced by experience—that they are working for themselves and for their own, verifiable and measurable interests. To eliminate unemployment, to reduce the hours of work, to assure goods and consumer services of a high quality, to guarantee a rapid and honest distribution of goods: this will become the business of each and of all.

The third economic model thus satisfies a moral requirement. This is not the least of its advantages.

Men and women do not live by bread alone. In discrediting socialism, in demoralizing the workers and the masses, the Stalinist dictatorship created an immense moral and ideological void. Out of this void today arise cynicism, egoism, indifference, and scorn with regard to others—indeed criminality—as well as retrograde ideas which find their sustenance there: irrationalism, chauvinism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, racism.

In the face of this unfurling of reactionary mentality, we reaffirm our belief in everything that is rational and generous in human nature, particularly cooperation and solidarity as fundamental qualities for the reconstruction of the economy, of society, and of the world.

This has become literally a question of physical survival for humanity—since the struggle of each against all, egoism, thirst for private profit, contempt for others, are leading us directly to disaster: nuclear catastrophes, wars of extermination,

ecological breakdowns, appalling misery in the third world.

Each year 17 million children die of hunger or curable diseases. Every four years as many dead as during the Second World War. Every four years a world war against children. One hundred million children work in inhuman conditions, often approaching slavery.

Solidarity, cooperation—even more, equality—must be extended to everyone, but above all to the most deprived. This means especially the sick, the disabled, the retired, single mothers, marginalized layers, the “new poor.” On a world scale it means the most oppressed and persecuted, our brothers and sisters of South Africa, Central America, and Palestine.

We must energetically condemn the war of the Western powers against Iraq. We must condemn the military intervention in Lithuania. We must condemn the collaboration between the governments of the United States and the USSR which tolerate these two acts of aggression.

After a long period of persecution and isolation the Fourth International is today recognized as a part of the workers’ movement and of the “new social movements” in a series of countries, thanks to the role which we play within the mass movement. We have developed within these movements a profoundly unifying approach. We advocate unity in the struggle for common objectives, overcoming all the differences that separate the Communist parties and the ex-Communist parties on the one hand, and the Social Democratic parties on the other.

These differences deal with the duty of socialists to defend intransigently the interests of the workers, of women, of oppressed nationalities, of ethnic minorities, of the environment, and of peace—against anything which might harm them. They deal with the duty of socialists to be intransigent defenders of democratic rights without restriction, notably against any limitation on the right to strike and freedom of the press. They concern the duty of socialists to stimulate the self-activity, the mobilization, the self-organization, and the democratic leadership of the masses, without subordination to any considerations of “realpolitik” or to the manipulations and hesitations of bureaucratic structures.

The confrontation of different ideas and strategies of struggle is inevitable under such conditions. But this prohibits neither unity in action nor dialogue. That is the reason I am participating in the publication of this magazine as a leader of the Fourth International. Without such an ongoing dialogue, our indispensable unity in action is impossible.

That is why the confrontation over ideas and strategies must take place under conditions that exclude the utilization of violence and repression, of prohibitions against written works, of slander, of lies, of

falsification of texts, of censorship—regarding anyone who is part of the workers' or mass movements. Respect for these principles is indispensable for the conquest of socialist democracy, of

democratic socialism, of a real democratic soviet power elected on the basis of political pluralism.

Thank you for your attention. □

The following article originally appeared under the title "L'alternative economique" in a special magazine issue of Rouge, the newspaper of the Ligue Communiste revolutionnaire(LCR), French section of the Fourth International. It was published to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the assassination of Leon Trotsky. Translation from the French is by Keith Mann.

Trotsky's Economic Ideas and the Soviet Union Today

by Ernest Mandel

As the bureaucratic USSR sinks into chaos, the economic platform of Trotsky and the Left Opposition emerges as an indispensable guide to the relaunching of a socialist project. This explains why for the liberals the "neo-Bolsheviks" are today the main enemy.

The disgraceful slanders hurled by Stalin and the neo-Stalinists against Leon Trotsky are today unanimously rejected in the USSR. On the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of his assassination the government daily *Izvestia* solemnly recognized that Lev Davidovich was a great and honest revolutionary, one of the principal founders and leaders of the Soviet state. Other newspapers have revealed that at two points during 1922 Lenin had proposed that Trotsky be vice president of the Council of People's Commissars and his designated successor in case of sickness or death.

But this is not to say that this rehabilitation of the founder of our movement signals an approval of his political platform which was opposed to that of Stalin. On the contrary. The media and social science circles in the USSR are dominated today by neo-social democratic and neo-liberal tendencies hostile to Leninism, to Marxism, and to the October revolution. For these currents, Trotsky remains an ideological adversary, Trotskyism a political enemy.

What is at stake, however, is an undeniable historical figure and tradition in the Soviet Union. It is difficult to deny that Stalin considered them as his number one enemies. As Stalin is hated by the immense majority of the Soviet people, it is necessary that the current ideologues work to prevent this hatred from translating automatically into a certain sympathy concerning Trotsky. The solution which they have

generally opted for is that of raising a new set of slanders, less inflammatory than those of the Stalinists and neo-Stalinists, but founded just as much on open historical falsifications.

It is an historical irony that Trotsky is reproached today not for having been a counterrevolutionary but for having been an ultraleft "revolutionary fanatic." He is not reproached for having been an adversary of Lenin, but for having been, in 1917 and later, the damned soul and "inspirer" of Lenin. Trotsky, the "bloody" incarnation of the October revolution (a Jew and a "cosmopolitan" imbued with "European culture" to boot), is the prime target of the neo-fascists and the neo-Black Hundreds who are sometimes openly allied with the neo-Stalinists. According to all the "democratic" opponents of the October revolution, Trotsky, the "dogmatic utopian" of "the historical mission of the working class," was the great leader of the "deviation" of Russian history from 1918 on.

An Opponent of the NEP?

Within this cacophony the debate around economic alternatives occupies a key place. Trotsky is said to have been an opponent of the NEP [New Economic Policy], the partisan of "superindustrialization," a fierce enemy of the private peasant, and the father of the "command economy." Stalin only applied Trotsky's economic program. The anti-Trotskyists in the USSR today say that the struggle between Stalin and Trotsky was simply a struggle for power between two despots.

This interpretation of the debate which swept the USSR from 1923 through 1928

all the way to 1934 involves a confusion between two distinct points of departure by Trotsky and the Left Opposition (not counting the capitulationists after 1929): The long-term analytical approach on the one hand, and the political approach operating on the immediate and medium term on the other. This confusion is the fruit of a deliberate lie, of ignorance, or of a lack of understanding about these questions.

In opposing the Stalinist theory that socialism could be achieved in one country, Trotsky affirmed his belief that, considering the nature of imperialism, whether socialism or capitalism would end up victorious in the Soviet Union could only be approached on an international scale. It was impossible to establish a true classless society of the "freely associated producers" in Russia because this required a median level of labor productivity superior to that of the most advanced capitalist countries, but also in permanent conflict with the world capitalist market. The weight of this antagonism would end up by crushing the chances for socialism in the USSR by military or economic pressure if the revolution did not spread to the "advanced industrial nations." This analysis of long-term trends certainly also had short-term implications. It underscored the dangers of a lagging development of industry which risked promoting an alliance between private Russian agriculture and the world capitalist market, a rupture of the worker-peasant alliance. To fight the dangers of capitalist restoration, it stressed the necessity of limiting the private accumulation of capital and of raising the productivity of state industry which would permit the sale of products at a lower price. This necessitated a more rapid development of industry.

Therefore, contrary to the legend of Stalinist-Bukharinist origin, developed in the 1960s by George Lukacs, Trotsky did not draw adventurist-defeatist conclusions from this analysis, which history has now confirmed in a striking way precisely on the economic plane. It in no way reduced the middle-term destiny of the Soviet Union to the dilemma of either a revolutionary war and territorial expansion or an inevitable retreat towards capitalism. On the contrary, he advanced the idea of a steady consolidation of the gains of the socialist revolution while waiting for the ripening of the objective and subjective conditions for revolutionary victories in the advanced countries. In other words, he proposed that the USSR enter the road of beginning to build socialism in a realistic and prudent manner without fanfare or illusions.

This "Trotskyist" alternative was based on the dialectic of economic logic and on the dynamic of social forces. Trotsky's analysis remains unmatched among twentieth century Marxists. The acceleration of the rhythm of industrialization must proceed through the steady transfer of the social surplus towards the productive socialized sector of the economy, that is to say, essentially at the expense of the middle bourgeoisie (kulaks and nepmen) and at the expense of the bureaucracy, by a radical reduction of unproductive expenditures.

A reinforcement of the social weight of the proletariat and the poor peasantry in society (as well as a fraction of the middle peasantry ready to participate) had to be realized through the raising of their standard of living and an improvement of their working conditions: the elimination of unemployment; the leading role of workers in factory management; the recruitment of the working peasantry to production cooperatives founded from the start on mechanized labor in order to guarantee to its members returns higher than they had known as individual producers.

These proposals were marked by an internal coherence that is still impressive today. The building of the first large tractor factory in 1923 would have assured the "voluntary participation of the poor peasants in the state farms." It would have freed the towns from the danger of being blackmailed by reductions in deliveries from the rich peasants by preventing the concentration of the agricultural surplus in their hands. It would have allowed the continued raising of real wages that had proceeded until 1926-'27. It would have provided the USSR with a powerful arms industry in order to defend itself from an eventual military attack over a ten-year rather than a five-year period.

At the same time this road of economic policy proposed to the Comintern and to

the Communist parties would permit them to take full advantage of revolutionary situations like those which occurred between 1923-1937 in Germany, Great Britain, Spain, and France.

Far from being "Trotskyism without Trotsky," Stalinist economic policy from 1928 on was the antithesis of that advanced by the Opposition. Full-scale industrialization was accompanied by a lowering, not a raising of real wages, by a catastrophic deterioration, not an improvement of labor conditions. Administrative expenses were not reduced but colossally increased, absorbing the major part of what had been taken from worker consumption. This was the monstrous deadweight of the bureaucracy and its absolute power over society. If the rise in production could not be supported by the interests and consciousness of the producers, it must be realized by force and general control. In place of "soviets everywhere" the reality was police control and red tape everywhere.

The forced collectivization of agriculture was the antithesis of the voluntary participation advocated by the Opposition, consistent with Lenin's "cooperative plan." It led to desperate resistance by the peasants, notably the massive slaughter of livestock. It was accompanied by a systematic underdevelopment of investments, in agriculture as much as in the service sector (stockpiling, transportation, distribution), and a fluctuating price policy. It was thus the source of misery in the countryside and poverty in the towns for decades.

Against the Command Economy

As soon as Stalin's policies became clear, Trotsky, Rakovsky, and the Left Opposition denounced the forced collectivization of agriculture, the total suppression of the NEP, "superindustrialization," the attacks against real wages and peasant incomes, and the deepening of social inequality. To identify the Opposition with these policies, to hold that they inspired them, amounts therefore to a pure and simple lie. To identify the thesis of Preobrazhensky-Trotsky, according to which in the long term an extension of private appropriation of the social surplus and market mechanisms would make capitalist restoration inevitable, with the short- and medium-term elimination of these mechanisms is a falsification of the economic orientation of Trotsky and the Left Opposition. Several quotations will suffice to demonstrate this.

The Opposition Speaks

Christian Rakovsky, V. Kossior, N. Muralov, and V. Kasparova wrote in the declaration of 1930:

The decree that abolished the NEP and the kulaks as a class is . . . an economic absurdity. . . . No charter, no decree can abolish the contradictions that still operate in the economy and in everyday life. . . . Attempts to ignore this economic truth . . . have led to the use of violence, breaking with the party's program, with the fundamental principles of Marxism, and contempt for Lenin's most basic warnings concerning collectivization, the middle peasantry, and the NEP.

On October 22, 1932, Trotsky continued in his article "The Soviet Economy in Danger":

If a universal mind existed, of the kind that projected itself into the scientific fancy of Laplace—a mind that could register simultaneously all the processes of nature and society, that could measure the dynamics of their motion, that could forecast the results of their interactions—such a mind, of course, could *a priori* draw up a faultless and exhaustive economic plan, beginning with the number of acres of wheat down to the last button for a vest. The bureaucracy often imagines that just such a mind is at its disposal; that is why it so easily frees itself from the control of the market and of Soviet democracy. But, in reality, the bureaucracy errs frightfully in its estimate of its spiritual resources. . . .

The innumerable living participants in the economy, state and private, collective and individual, must serve notice of their needs and of their relative strength not only through the statistical determinations of plan commissions but by the direct pressure of supply and demand. The plan is checked and, to a considerable degree, realized through the market. The regulation of the market itself must depend upon the tendencies that are brought out through its mechanism. The blueprints produced by the departments must demonstrate their economic efficacy through commercial calculation. The system of the transitional economy is unthinkable without the control of the ruble. This presupposes, in its turn, that the ruble is at par. Without a firm monetary unit, commercial accounting can only increase the chaos.¹

He followed up on this in *The Revolution Betrayed*:

While the growth of industry and the bringing of agriculture into the sphere of state planning vastly complicates the tasks of leadership, bringing to the front the problem of *quality*, bureaucratism destroys the creative initiative and the feeling of responsibility without which there is not, and cannot be, qualitative progress. The ulcers of bureaucratism are perhaps not so obvious in the big industries, but they are devouring, together with the cooperatives, the light- and food-producing industries, the collective farms, the small local industries—that is, all those branches of economy which stand nearest to the people. . . .

It is possible to build gigantic factories according to a ready-made Western pattern by bureaucratic command—although, to be sure, at triple the normal cost. But the farther you go, the more the economy runs into the problem of quality, which slips out of the hands of a bureaucracy like a shadow. The Soviet products are as though branded with the gray label of indifference. Under a nationalized economy, *quality* demands a democracy of producers and consumers, freedom of criticism and initiative—conditions incompatible with a totalitarian regime of fear, lies, and flattery.²

Three Orientations

There were three distinct currents of economic policy in the CPSU between 1928 and 1934, assuming the supporters of Bukharin remained so after 1933, which is not at all certain.

Stalin's line was founded on the forced collectivization of agriculture and super-industrialization at the expense of the workers and peasants, and ultracentralized and ultradisproportionate planning (or rather semiplanning).

Bukharin's line was based on the "peaceful coexistence" of the private and socialized economy, the former being charged with providing for the latter whose expansion would remain sharply limited.

The Opposition's line foresaw a more rapid expansion of the socialized sector than Bukharin's plan, but much less rapid and certainly more balanced than Stalin's. It called for the reduction of unproductive expenses like those appropriated by the bureaucracy as well as the improvement of the lives of workers and working peasants.

These three currents clearly reflected the pressure of different social forces. But it must be remembered that, at least during the period from 1930-33, the differences between the concrete proposals of the Opposition and those of the Bukharinists were much less clear than with those of Stalin.

What characterized the economic program of the Opposition more than anything else was the unity and clarity of its economic positions on the one hand and its political and social positions on the other: soviet democracy, satisfaction of the material demands of the producers, the struggle against inequality and bureaucratic privileges.

In 1932, also in "The Soviet Economy in Danger," Trotsky declared that:

The struggle between living interests, as the fundamental factor of planning, leads us into the domain of *politics*, which is concentrated economics. The instruments of the social groups of Soviet society are—should be: the Soviets, the trade unions, the cooperatives, and in first place the ruling party. Only through the interaction of these three elements, state planning, the market, and Soviet democracy, can the correct direction of the economy of the transitional epoch be attained.³

This last sentence deserves to be underlined. And in *The Revolution Betrayed*, Trotsky held that:

A restoration of the right of criticism and a genuine freedom of elections are necessary conditions for the further development of the country. This assumes a revival of freedom of Soviet parties, beginning with the party of Bolsheviks, and a resurrection of the trade unions. The bringing of democracy into industry means a radical revision of plans in the interests of the toilers. Free discussion of economic problems will decrease the overhead expense of bureaucratic mistakes and zigzags. Expensive playthings—palaces of the Soviets, new theaters, show-off subways—will be crowded out in favor of workers' dwellings. "Bourgeois norms of distribution" will be confined within the limits of strict necessity, and, in step with the growth of social wealth, will give way to socialist equality.⁴

These lines written fifty-five years ago retain a burning relevance in today's USSR. Once again, we find three fundamentally different currents of economic policy:

- The first is to maintain the bureaucratic control over the economy at the price of important economic reforms.
- The second aims at developing an important private sector with encouragement given to the primitive accumulation of capital.
- The third is a neo-socialist defense of the immediate interests of the

workers (full employment, increased buying power, social services) and of the reduction of social injustices and inequalities.

The second tendency, in contradiction to that of Bukharin and his comrades who were honest communists, is essentially anti-communist and anti-socialist. The third is not Trotskyist. But it must increasingly borrow from the ideas of revolutionary Marxism, regardless of the vocabulary it chooses, in order for it to join hands with the real independent workers' movement currently reviving in the USSR.

New Slanders

It is noteworthy that a pro-capitalist and liberal opponent of Bolshevism, Leonid Radzikhovski, writing in the September 9 issue of the *Moscow News*, accuses both neo-Stalinists like Nina Andreyevna and comrade Buzgalin, spokesman of the "Marxist Platform" in the CPSU, of being inspired by Trotsky's ideas—putting them in the same bag in the best Stalinist tradition. "Neo-Bolsheviks" are thus all "neo-Trotskyists."

However, the same Radzikhovski had to recognize that "Thanks to his Marxist analysis, Trotsky discovered the principal evil in Soviet society: The struggle of a new aristocracy, of the bureaucracy against the popular masses who brought it to power. . . . Trotsky also developed in the 1930s a program for reorganizing the Soviet Union that involved democratization, self-management, openness, and even the market." Exactly. But to accuse the new Soviet socialist left of wanting to "defend the bureaucratic system against capitalism" is a gross slander. Like Trotsky, the true "neo-Bolsheviks" fight on two fronts: Against the bureaucracy and against the rising middle bourgeoisie. That is consistent with the workers' material interests.

The supreme contradiction that the neo-liberals face is the following: How can the majority of citizens be prevented from defending their own interests while the sacred right of every individual is proclaimed? In the name of what principle? Could it be, in the best Stalinist tradition, that the people must be made to be happy in spite of and against itself by the use of force? □

Notes

1. "The Soviet Economy in Danger," (*Writings of Leon Trotsky (1932)* (New York, Pathfinder Press, 1973), pp. 273-274.

2. *The Revolution Betrayed* (New York, Pioneer Publishers, 1937), pp. 275-276.

3. *op. cit.*, p.275.

4. *op. cit.*, p.289.

World Congress of the Fourth International Is Held

by Steve Bloom

A world congress of the Fourth International took place early in February in the shadow of the Persian Gulf war that was then raging against the people of Iraq, waged by the United States and its allies. Delegates from Europe, Latin America, Africa, Asia, and North America all exchanged information about the struggle that was taking place against that war in their respective parts of the world. The common, principled stand taken by all sections and sympathizing organizations of the FI demanding an immediate and unconditional withdrawal of imperialist troops from the Persian Gulf became a living illustration of the strong unity that underlies our world movement.

Other substantive political questions on the agenda of the 11-day congress included: the world political situation; events in the USSR; the international struggle to defend the environment; Latin America; a separate discussion on the struggles of women in Latin America; capitalist Europe; and women's liberation in the imperialist countries. The draft of a basic, programmatic manifesto for the FI—which takes up a revolutionary Marxist response to the many new problems that are posed for humanity today, tying them into our overall theoretical perspectives—was discussed and delegated to the incoming International Executive Committee for final updating and editing. A more specific manifesto on the need for internationalism in today's struggles was approved.

Forty-six countries were represented at the congress, either through regular delegates or by observers.

Of particular interest for readers of the *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism* is the decision taken on the organizational situation in the U.S. The last world congress, in 1985, took place when the Socialist Workers Party still maintained formal fraternal relations with the FI. (U.S. revolutionists are prohibited from actually belonging to the FI because of reactionary legislation.) Although the SWP had by then already expelled some dozens of individuals who remained loyal to the international Trotskyist movement, it remained the largest grouping in the U.S. that identified with the FI. Its status as a sympathizing section in the U.S. was therefore continued.

The 1985 congress delegates, however, rejected the political purge from the SWP and recognized those who had been expelled—at that time organized in Socialist Action and the Fourth Internationalist Tendency—as also maintaining their fraternal membership in the FI. The readmission of those

expelled back into the SWP was called for. Shortly after that congress, a split in Socialist Action gave rise to another group of individuals identified with the FI, those who ultimately joined the fusion which created the group Solidarity.

When the SWP formally severed its ties to the FI last year it created a significantly new situation. The SWP did not attend this year's congress, but the FIT, SA, and the Fourth International Caucus of Solidarity did send delegates. The question was posed, then, of how the congress should deal with the status of these groups—in particular because Socialist Action had asked that it be recognized as the new sympathizing section, replacing the SWP.

SA's proposal, however, was opposed by both the FIT and the FI Caucus of Solidarity. It was rejected. Instead, the world congress delegates adopted the following motion:

Since the last world congress, the Fourth International in the USA has been divided in different organizations due to the successive waves of expulsions from the Socialist Workers Party (SWP). In June 1990 the SWP severed its relations with the FI, leaving three groups of FI supporters in the USA: Socialist Action (SA), the Fourth Internationalist Tendency (FIT), and the Fourth International Caucus (FIC) of Solidarity. The recent departure of the SWP as the fraternal section in the USA creates a new situation, but it is unrealistic to expect that the division of our forces can be quickly or easily overcome since the remaining three organizations have developed separately on the basis of different perspectives over the course of six years.

Motions:

1. The Thirteenth World Congress acknowledges the fact that an abnormal situation exists in our movement in the USA. Our forces are divided in three organizations. We recognize SA, FIT, and FIC as having full membership rights in the FI to the extent that this is compatible with U.S. law.

2. At the same time we urge the three organizations to take steps in order to overcome this situation by: a) establishing common discussions with an aim toward expanding points of political agreement, b) seeking common areas of political activity, including joint work around FI projects as well as coordinating work in the mass movement in the USA.

3. The USec and IEC must take initiatives to facilitate this process and the world congress urges all sections to act in a way which will encourage it as well.

On the following pages we are printing a few additional items of interest in relation to the world congress. □

The following resolutions were adopted during the second week of February by the World Congress of the Fourth International.

Declaration on Events in the Baltic Republics

With its support for the UN resolutions on the Persian Gulf war, the Gorbachev leadership bears a heavy responsibility for the imperialist offensive in that region. Profiting from the context created by the war and from the cozy relationship between Gorbachev and Bush, Soviet repressive forces intervened in the Baltic republics and still remain there as an occupation force.

This authoritarian blow takes place in the context of a general repressive turn by the Kremlin and an open threat to establish direct rule by Moscow over the republics. The goal is to reimpose a compulsory union at a time when, in different forms, all the republics are asserting their sovereignty or their independence—along with a general rejection of diktats from the center.

The Fourth International considers the growth of the movements of oppressed nationalities in the USSR to be an essential component of the broader process of developing self-activity by the Soviet masses. We unconditionally support the desire of the Baltic populations—already confirmed by referendum—to separate from the Soviet Union and their declaration of independence. We oppose any attempt to prevent the exercise of that right, whatever disagreement we might have with the existing nationalist movements or their governments in power. Military intervention by the Kremlin against the national movements blocks the essential clarification in each of the republics of the relevant social, economic, and political questions. It is also an attempt to block the first development of multinational resistance by the populations in the face of price increases.

We demand the withdrawal of all troops from the Baltics and respect for the right of all the nations and nationalities of the Soviet Union to freely determine their own future and their relations with other nations. This right of self-determination will only be a formality if the concerned nations and nationalities continue to be subject to repression, to the pressure and control of military and police forces or of oppressive administrative state apparatuses.

Internationalism and solidarity between nations and nationalities must stand on the foundation of the full recognition of national rights. Socialism itself will continue to be discredited in the eyes of the Soviet people and the peoples of the world as long as it continues to be identified with an oppressive power.

That is why the FI unconditionally supports the right of self-determination for all oppressed nations, nationalities, and national minorities—that is, their right to freely choose what links to have with other nations. In the struggle for socialist democracy, we call for rooting out any vestige of oppressive Stalinist power. Toward that goal we fight for the full development of democracy, both political and social. This implies the self-organization of the workers in a context of opposition to all bureaucratic manipulation and of respect for national rights—especially for minorities. We fight against any form of Great Russian chauvinism, racism, and any dynamic toward an “ethnically pure” state. Opposing the maintenance of a compulsory union and of bureaucratic centralism, we favor the full assertion of sovereignty—that is, either separation or free association as they choose—for all the nations and nationalities of the USSR. □

Appeal for Solidarity with Algerian Women

The *intifada* of October 5, 1988, has allowed workers, youth, women, and the popular masses to express themselves and to organize together, but the rise of fundamentalism threatens these liberties, which have been won at such a high cost.

Preoccupied with opening up to the world market, the Algerian state—which repeatedly attempts to block the democratic movements—has shown an unequalled complacency in the face of fundamentalist aggression against non-Islamic meetings, an unlimited tolerance of violence against women; it has accepted without reacting to the Islamist militia laying siege to the students’ residences at the universities.

The Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) threatens the small gains won by Algerian women and enjoys a very large consensus in the patriarchal Algerian society. Indeed, in this country, the family code dating from 1984 means that women must have a guardian in order to marry, must obey her husband and his family, makes it almost impossible to divorce and forces them to abandon their children if they remarry, etc.

Fundamentalists are attacking women’s right to work, even though they make up only 4 percent of the workforce. They attack coeducational (mixed sex) schools and separate men’s and women’s jobs in the Islamic town halls.

In reality, it is the right to study and to walk around with or without the *hidjab* (veil) that is threatened.

This misogynist campaign helps promote attacks. A brother burnt his sister with a blowtorch because she didn't want to abandon her job as a nurse; women living alone have had their houses burnt or wrecked.

Women have reacted courageously: they have built associations, demonstrated against attacks and against threats to jobs and the right to study. They have denounced the electoral law which allows women's enemies to vote, via procuration, in their place.

They have been accused of being "French agents," "the sparrowhawks of colonialism," but 4,000 of them demonstrated on March 8, 1989, and 20,000 on March 8, 1990.

While today the defenders of the most reactionary policies possess the most sophisticated means of propaganda, women don't have the resources to print the smallest leaflet, the smallest appeal.

Algerian women are in danger! They have no more than a few months to organize themselves better so as to confront the danger of the fundamentalists' winning the next legislative elections.

Algerian women need your material and political solidarity! □

Greetings from a Veteran Trotskyist

The following greetings by Charlie van Gelderen, delegate to the Founding Conference of the Fourth International in 1938, was presented to the 1991 World Congress in February.

Dear Comrades,

In 1938 we met in Paris—in the home of Albert Rosmer—a handful of us, nearly all from Europe and the United States. There was no one from what was then the colonial world—yes, there was one, C.L.R. James, born in Trinidad but here representing one of the (all too many) British groups. Then there was myself, in Paris on behalf of one of the South African grouplets (Lenin Club—Communist League). If my memory serves me right, there might have been a representative from Brazil.

We were in Paris to found the Fourth International—the World Party of the Socialist Revolution.

We were a world party only in our aspiration.

Today, 59 years later, I look at this conference with its delegates, observers, and guests from every corner of the world—a conference which is symbolic of the world when the International shall be the human race.

I am particularly pleased at the presence here of our friends from South Africa, where I first began my political activities.

For me it is both an honor and a source of pride to be here today—a feeling that my half-century and more in our movement has not been in vain. The dividend has not come as fast as we once expected but our time is certainly coming.

Today, 59 years after I as a young person attended that founding conference; I am as convinced as I was then that the Fourth International is an historic necessity. We set out on that road in a period of gloom—in Germany Hitler had come to power—the most powerful working class movement outside the Soviet Union had been crushed without a struggle, thanks to the betrayals of the Stalinists and Social Democrats; in the Soviet Union the Bolshevik party was being physically exterminated by Stalin; in Spain the civil war was drawing to its painful close. Conjecturally, there could not have been a worse time to found a new International. But we were not looking at the conjuncture. We were taking the long view of history. There was no gloom in that room in Paris. We were armed with the revolutionary traditions we had inherited from the October revolution; we were armed with Trotsky's Transitional Program.

Amidst the darkness of the war clouds which were gathering, we lit the candle of hope for the future of humanity.

This Thirteenth Congress is the heir to that tradition—to use that candle to light the conflagration which will destroy the capitalist system and usher in the socialist future.

Long Live the Fourth International!

Treatment of Political Prisoners in the United States Is Denounced

On December 7-10, 1990, a special international tribunal convened at Hunter College in New York to look into the situation of political prisoners and prisoners of war in the United States. The verdict of the tribunal, affirming the existence of such prisoners, and the first two sections of its findings appeared in our issue No. 82. We published part III of the findings last month. Here we conclude with parts IV through VII. For further information on the tribunal and the problem of political prisoners in the U.S. contact: Freedom Now, 59 E. Van Buren, Rm. 1400, Chicago, IL 60605, 312-663-4399 or 278-6706.

IV. Puerto Rican Prisoners of War

Among the Petitioners are 13 Puerto Rican women and men (Carlos Torres, Adolfo Matos, Dylcia Pagan, Ida Luz Rodriguez, Carmen Valentin, Elizam Escobar, Alejandrina Torres, Ricardo Jimenez, Alicia Rodriguez, Luis Rosa, Edwin Cortes, Alberto Rodriguez, and Oscar Lopez Rivera) most of whom have been held in U.S. prisons since 1980. They are serving literal life sentences for their involvement with a clandestine Puerto Rican independence liberation group, Fuerzas Armadas de Liberacion Nacional (FALN). They are combatants in a struggle against colonialism and for national liberation in accordance with Article I, Paragraph 4 of Additional Protocol I to the 1949 Geneva Conventions, extending POW protections to "include armed conflicts in which peoples are fighting against colonial domination and alien occupation and against racist regimes, in the exercise of their right of self-determination." Pursuant to the Resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly on the Rights of Colonial People and the Legal Status of Combatants Struggling Against Colonial and Alien Domination of Racist Regimes, which provide that combatants struggling against colonialism "are to be accorded the status of prisoners of war and their treatment should be in accordance with the Geneva Convention" (Resolution 3103 [XXVIII], 12 December 1973), these Puerto Rican combatants are entitled to be treated as Prisoners of War.

The U.S. has refused POW status to these anti-colonial fighters, claiming that it is not a signatory to the Additional Protocols. This refusal to accept universally recognized humanitarian protections for peoples fighting colonialism, apartheid, and alien domination should not and does not preclude the according of these protections.

Colonialism has been identified as a crime for over three decades. The UN General Assembly has consistently asserted that colonized and dependent people have the right to use all means available including armed struggle to resist colonialism. And, since the General Assembly Resolution 3103 was passed in 1973, captured anti-colonialism combatants have been en-

titled to POW status. This protected status for people fighting colonialism is specifically designed to assist the customary international law right to self-determination and to deter the colonial power from perpetuating the crime of colonialism.

The expansion of the definition of international conflicts in the Additional Protocols to the Geneva Convention, to include those struggling for national liberation, also constituted recognition by the international community that the protection of anti-colonial fighters was to be elevated to a customary norm of international law.

Clearly today, if not in 1977 when the Additional Protocols were first enacted, now that colonialism has been universally condemned and almost eradicated from the world, those who fight against colonialism are entitled to special protection and should not be criminalized by the colonial power.

We find, therefore, that Puerto Rican combatants who have asserted their right to POW status are entitled not to be tried in the U.S. courts but to be protected under the Geneva Convention. We believe that these prisoners who have been illegally incarcerated and criminalized for over ten years should be unconditionally released or, at the very least, transferred to a neutral country.

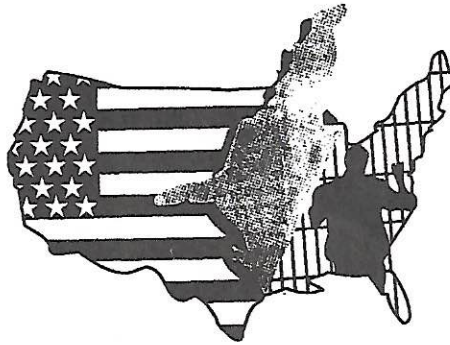
Certain other Petitioners who are people struggling for self-determination for Black people in the United States and Native American people have also asserted the right to be considered as Prisoners of War. We believe that these claims have merit as these are people fighting against alien occupation or racist regimes. However, the evidence before the Tribunal does not allow us to reach a definitive conclusion at this time, and we recommend that there be further investigation into these claims.

V. White North American Opponents of United States Government Policies

Testimony was presented on behalf of white North Americans who have been imprisoned for protesting U.S. foreign and domestic policies and against militarism, war, and nuclear armaments. The actions of these Petitioners have taken a variety of forms, from symbolic acts of sabotage of weapons

Findings of the Special International Tribunal

on the Violation of Human Rights of Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War in United States Jails (Conclusion)



of war by the Plowshares group, to armed actions against U.S. military or corporate targets supporting apartheid and intervention in Central America.

The Petitioners involved in these activities share a common belief that it is their responsibility as citizens of the United States to engage in acts of resistance intended to prevent or impede ongoing criminal activity in the conduct of the policies of the U.S. government.

At the trials of these Petitioners, United States courts have routinely denied them the opportunity to present a defense based upon a citizen's right to resist illegal state conduct and based upon their religious and/or political motivations. The Tribunal heard from an expert witness on international law that these defenses are well grounded in the First Amendment to the United States Constitution as well as the Tokyo and Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunals.

We conclude that the United States government has criminalized and imprisoned white North Americans who have struggled in solidarity with national liberation movements and other peoples struggling for self-determination, for peace and against nuclear armaments and against racism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination.

VI. Criminalization and Denial of the Rule of Law

"Whereas it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law. . . ."

Preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, December 10, 1948.

It is a violation of international law for a state to attempt to criminalize the struggle of peoples to achieve self-determination. According to the authoritative United Nations Resolution 2625 (XXV) of 1970: "Every State has the duty to refrain from any forcible action which deprives peoples . . . of their right to self-determination and freedom and independence," and Resolutions 33/22 and 33/24 (1978) which condemn the imprisonment and detention of people fighting colonialism.

We have heard testimony of the development of a system of repression in the United States, which uses the courts and judicial system as a key element to deny peoples' rights to self-determination and to disrupt people organizing to oppose illegal U.S. government policies.

The evidence shows that the U.S. government is using a strategy which parallels certain other states (e.g., South Africa, Israel, and British administration in the North of Ireland) confronting insurgent movements, through the creation of repressive and antidemocratic modifications to the legal system aimed at the suppression of radical political opposition. This counter-insurgency strategy allows for the enhancement of the power of law enforcement to surveil and infiltrate political groups as well as to coerce cooperation with police investigations and to criminalize political association.

The testimony showed that federal agents are authorized to spy on and infiltrate political, community, and religious groups, and substantial evidence was received of such activity. In addition, the Tribunal was informed of the use of highly sophisticated electronic technology to carry out video and audio surveillance at the homes and workplaces of members and supporters of the Puerto Rican liberation movement.

Additionally, litigation in Puerto Rico has recently revealed the existence of more than 100,000 dossiers collected by the police on activists and supporters of the cause of independence who have been labeled "subversives" by the police because of their legitimate desire and work to end colonization.

The FBI also uses an internment power through the federal grand jury to force cooperation with investigations into political activities under pain of imprisonment for refusal. The grand jury, a secret proceeding under the direction and control of the government, is used as a tool to intern political people. The government issues subpoenas to a secret hearing where there is no judge and where defense counsel is barred from attending. The coerced witness can be stripped of his/her fundamental right to remain silent and forced to answer all questions about political associations and activities. A refusal to appear or answer results in civil contempt penalties of up to 18 months or criminal contempt, which has no maximum limit of sentence.

Scores of activists in political movements have been imprisoned over the last fifteen years through this process. The government has even re-subpoenaed activists who have already served time in prison for refusing to collaborate with grand juries, in full knowledge that the person has not collaborated and will not do so in the future. This effectively constitutes internment without trial or just cause.

Political activists are often charged with violations of broad conspiracy laws which rely on evidence of political associations and beliefs to prove "criminal" agreements. Two special statutes, Seditious Conspiracy and the Racketeer-Influenced Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act, specifically allow for the criminalization of membership in political organizations and national liberation movements. These statutes have been used to incarcerate political activists with lengthy sentences. The Seditious Conspiracy law specifically criminalizes opposition to U.S. governmental authority and has been used particularly against the Puerto Rican independence movement to criminalize its resistance to colonialism. Under this law a mere agreement to oppose U.S. authority with force, without proof of any act taken in furtherance of that agreement, is subject to a 20-year sentence.

Political prisoners in the U.S. are also victims of false charges and prosecutions in which evidence favorable to the accused is deliberately suppressed. The Tribunal was presented with evidence of three particularly serious cases: Geronimo Ji Jaga Pratt, Leonard Peltier, and Dhoruba Bin Wahad, in which the government deliberately destroyed and concealed evidence which would have established their innocence.

Those charged with politically motivated offenses are frequently held in preventive detention. Specifically, the evidence showed that the U.S. government's use of the Bail Reform Act of 1984 violates international law by designating as "dangerous to the community" persons who struggle for self-determination. This statute enables the government to jail its opponents for years without trial by means of indefinite preventive detention, thus denying the right to speedy trial or to release pending trial. When the FBI arrested 15 Puerto Rican independentists on August 30, 1985, the government invoked this law to detain every accused. In spite of the community's clamor for these activists to be released, the courts found almost all of those arrested to be a "danger" to the community and held them under

punitive isolation for periods between 18 months to almost four years without trial. The last to be released, Filiberto Ojeda Rios, who had triple bypass open heart surgery, was released only because the U.S. courts held that his lengthy pretrial custody had become an embarrassment to U.S. democracy. Ojeda was redetained for another year within three months of his release, as a result of a three-year-old charge arising out of his original arrest.

Excessive pretrial detention violates international law provisions Article II(1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 9(3) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, as well as Article 8(1) of the American Convention of Human Rights, 1969.

The Tribunal also received evidence of a series of repressive measures employed in political trials. Of particular concern was the evidence indicating a deliberate attack by the U.S. government on the independence and impartiality of the trial jury. The media have been used to poison attitudes in the community from which that jury will be selected. Just as disturbing is the use of "anonymous" trial juries. Under the latter system, by declaring the necessity to keep jurors' identities secret, those same jurors are inevitably prejudiced into believing that they have cause to fear the political defendants. This fear is further exacerbated by the intentional and excessive militarization of courtroom security employed to turn political trial courts into armed encampments. The Tribunal was informed of the use of multiple metal detectors, concrete bunkers, armed marshals, sharpshooters on roofs adjacent to courthouses and, in one case, the erection of a special bullet-proof glass partition to separate the accused from the public.

The Tribunal also heard that trial venues are manipulated, particularly in the case of Puerto Rican activists, to deny them a trial in their homeland by their peers. Also, politically accused persons are routinely denied the right to present a full defense, including issues of necessity and justification under international law.

The use of the judicial system to repress political activists violates Articles 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Articles 9 and 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Such conduct further violates Article 5 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, 1966.

We find most disturbing that the U.S. government continues to incarcerate certain Petitioners despite documentary and other proof, disclosed after conviction, conclusively establishing that they did not commit the offenses for which they have been tried.

Excessive and Inhumane Sentences

The evidence showed that the United States government metes out the longest sentences of any country in the world to its political prisoners. Such excessive and disproportionate sentences imposed on persons active in self-determination struggles and in support of those struggles constitute torture, inhuman and degrading treatment in violation of Article 1 of UN Resolution 3452(XXX), the Declaration on Protection from Torture, 1975.

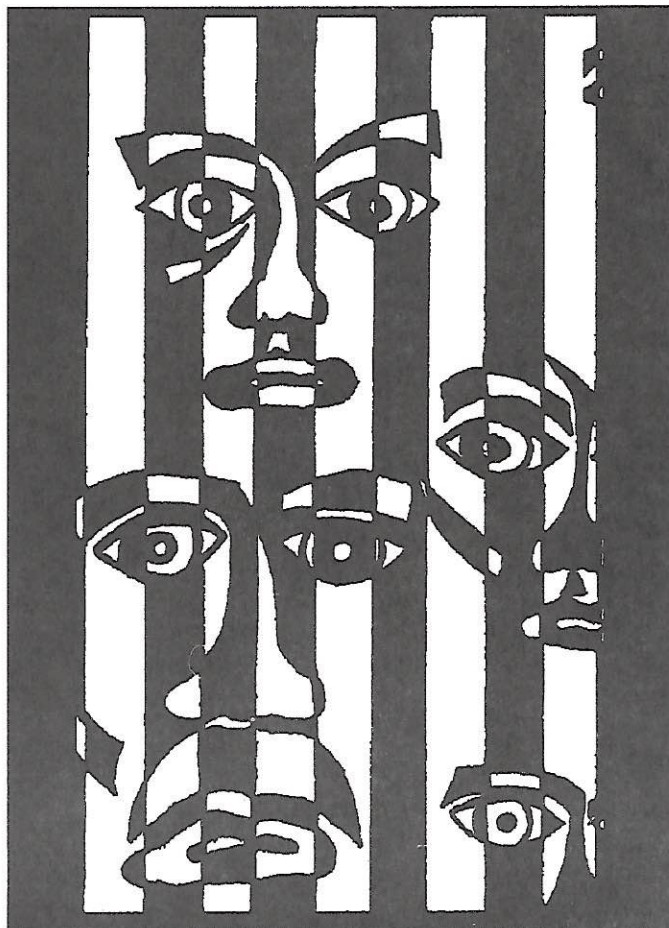
Most of the political prisoners and Prisoners of War are serving the equivalent of natural life in prison. The Puerto

Rican POWs, many of whom have already spent more than 10 years in prison, have sentences averaging 67 years. The judge who sentenced them stated that he would have given them the death penalty if it had been within his power.

Mumia Abu Jamal currently sits on Pennsylvania's death row under sentence of death. Leonard Peltier has served over 13 years of two *consecutive* life sentences; Sundiata Acoli is serving life plus 30 years; Herman Bell, Nuh Washington, and Jalil Bottom are each serving 25 years to life.

Evidence was presented demonstrating that the political beliefs of Petitioners have been used as a basis to impose, in many instances, sentences of life imprisonment. Moreover, it is clear that the sentences imposed upon Petitioners are grossly disproportionate to sanctions imposed upon members of right-wing and/or racist organizations convicted of similar offenses. For example, an assassin of Chilean diplomat Orlando Letelier was permitted in a plea agreement, wherein most charges were dropped, to receive a sentence of 12 years. Conversely, Petitioner Yu Kikumura, arrested with three pipe bombs in his car, was charged with 12 separate offenses and received an aggregate sentence of 30 years.

In 1986, a man convicted for planning and carrying out bombings, without making warning calls, of ten occupied health clinics where abortions were performed received a sentence of ten years and was paroled after 46 months. By contrast, Petitioner Raymond L'vasseur was convicted of bombing four unoccupied military targets in protest against U.S. foreign policies and received a total sentence of 45 years.



Another acknowledged abortion clinic bomber received seven years following his arrest in possession of over 100 pounds of explosives in a populous Manhattan apartment building. Petitioners Tim Blunk and Susan Rosenberg, charged with possession of explosives in a storage facility, each received sentences of 58 years.

A Ku Klux Klansman, charged with violations of the Neutrality Act and with possessing a boatload of explosives and weapons to be used in an invasion of Dominica, received an eight-year sentence. Petitioner Linda Evans was convicted of purchasing four weapons with false identification and was sentenced to 40 years, the longest sentence ever imposed for this offense in U.S. history.

The evidence also established that Petitioners have been denied parole as a penalty for refusing to renounce their political beliefs and associations.

VII. Torture and Cruel, Inhuman, and Degrading Treatment

As part of the system of repression in the United States, we heard testimony that the government uses the prisons as a key element in its efforts to deny people the right to exercise self-determination and disrupt people organizing to oppose U.S. policies. The evidence established that the Defendants use political beliefs and associations as a basis for classification and placement in highly punitive and restrictive isolation units.

The testimony of Dr. Stuart Grassian, a psychiatric expert on the serious and harmful effects of long-term isolation and solitary confinement, made a profound impression on the Tribunal. Evidence was also received which showed that in the early 1960s the U.S. prisons adopted a policy to put into effect brainwashing practices to "modify" the behavior of political prisoners and resisters.

Further, with full knowledge that conditions of solitary confinement, "small group isolation," and restricted sensory stimulation cause adverse psychopathological effects, the evidence also showed that the Defendants have created and maintained prisons and control units embodying these conditions, such as the U.S. Federal Penitentiary at Marion, Illinois, the Women's High Security Unit at Lexington, Kentucky, and New York State's Shawangunk Correctional Facility.

The U.S. penitentiary at Marion, condemned by Amnesty International as violating virtually every one of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, holds more political prisoners and Prisoners of War than any other prison in the United States. Prison officials place political prisoners at Marion and retain them there for years although they do not meet the stated criteria for assignment there. A U.S. court which found the conditions at Marion to pass constitutional muster was nonetheless forced to describe them as "sordid" and "depressing in the extreme." Locked in their cells over 22 hours daily, the prisoners at Marion are denied meaningful human interaction and essential sensory stimulation. Their visits are non-contact through glass, and they are required to submit to a strip-search before and after visits. Their only source of drinking water is contaminated with

carcinogenic chloroform and is reliably suspected of containing dangerous levels of toxins.

The Women's High Security Unit at Lexington, Kentucky, which was closed in 1988 as the result of a national and international human rights campaign, was also condemned by Amnesty International, which found that the Federal Bureau of Prisons deliberately placed political prisoners there in cruel, inhuman, and degrading conditions because of their political beliefs. The conditions included two years of isolation in subterranean cells, daily strip-searches, sleep deprivation, and denial of privacy to the extent that male guards were able to observe the women bathing. Expert medical testimony demonstrated that the conditions were calculated to destroy the women psychologically and physically.

We find that the Defendants place political prisoners and Prisoners of War in such prisons, and under such conditions, as part of their efforts to destroy them and to repress the struggles which they represent.

The evidence showed that in addition to the use of isolation in control unit prisons, the Defendants also use other prison conditions as a means of breaking political prisoners and Prisoners of War. These conditions include assassination; torture; sexual assault; strip and cavity searches, including such searches by male staff on women prisoners; punitive transfers; false accusations of violating prison rules; censorship; denial of religious worship; harassment of families; limitation of visits; and denial of necessary medical care.

Several political prisoners with cancer have been subjected to lengthy and punitive delays in diagnosis and treatment. Alan Berkman, suffering from Hodgkin's disease, has nearly died several times because prison officials have withheld necessary medical treatment and refused to place him in an appropriate medical facility. Kwasi Balagoon, suffering with AIDS, was not diagnosed until ten days before his death. Silvia Baraldini's palpable abdominal lumps were ignored for months, only to reveal that she had an aggressive form of uterine cancer.

The evidence also showed that the courts of the U.S. have consistently condoned and sanctioned the application of such punitive and harmful conditions and their application to political prisoners and Prisoners of War.

We find that the Defendants' treatment of political prisoners and Prisoners of War constitutes torture, cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment in violation of Article 6 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and contravenes most of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners. The U.S. government is also in breach of the First, Eighth, and Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution of the United States and their equivalent provisions in the various state constitutions; the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons From Being Subjected to Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the American Declaration of Human Rights; and the Geneva Convention and the protocols thereto. □

Notebooks for the Grandchildren

by Mikhail Baitalsky

44. To Each His Own (Cont.)

While I am lying on the top bunk, unable to get any reading done, I will try to tell you about some of the barrack's residents. Was it an accident that Dmitro Gnatyuk had been placed not far from me? He had served Hitler's forces—not as a village headman and not as a policeman. He personally never killed a single Jew himself, he assured everyone; but up until the day he was released from camp, he never rejected the idea that someone should kill all the Jews for him.

Gnatyuk was a sort of ideological chief for the Bandera supporters and former Nazi police collaborators of our barracks. He spoke out boldly on all questions of contemporary politics, economics, and even art. The Jews were blamed for everything. The Kiev Jews (that is, those who got what was coming to them at Babi Yar) sold out Ukraine. Other Jews bought Ukraine—Moscow Jews. The camps for former police collaborators was a Jewish idea. They served as translators for Hitler—it is no accident that the Jewish language is similar to German. Then, turning on Hitler, they sold him to their American relatives, and through them to Moscow. At some point they will betray Moscow too and sell it to American relatives. Jews can't be trusted! They eat unearned bread; they eat our bread! It's too bad that every last one of them wasn't wiped out. But don't worry about it, Gnatyuk consoled his listeners. The day will come when you won't have to hear anything more about the Jews.

That's what he predicted as he stood surrounded by his friends in the drying room, among the footbindings that were hanging up to dry over the stove. The drying room served as a clubhouse for the chosen few: it was warmer than the barracks and more comfortable. It was nice having the footbindings over the stove; it gave the place a homey smell; a potato stolen from the kitchen was cooking. What a nice place to be!

Gnatyuk had a strong lisp and saliva sprayed from his mouth when he spoke. Even his friends considered him a bit of an imbecile. But he considered himself an oracle of justice. Because Jews had managed over the course of many years to worm their way into all the holes and had been particularly insolent in pushing themselves forward since 1917, it was only

just that not another word should ever be said about them. He was not the cretin he seemed to be!

Without knowing it, he anticipated almost word for word the future program of several varieties of neo-Nazis, who no longer attack the Slavs but tend to be on friendly terms with them while reiterating with redoubled ardor their attacks on universal Zionism. Gnatyuk even then was for socialism and sought an alliance with the camp's Cultural-Educational Department official, although he was closest of all with the godfather. Gnatyuk had found a very healthy way of combining the struggle for the liberation of his people with hatred for the idea of national liberation for Jews.

Yefim and I on our day off went to the drying room to fry some bread in the margarine we had stood in line so long for. There was Dmitro, making his prophecies, surrounded by listeners. His broad puffy face (in the camp such a face was called a "box") was shiny from the heat and the grease. While others were growing emaciated, he had managed to stay fat. Seeing us, he winked at his listeners and started to lay it on thick. During his days with the Hitler forces, he heard Goebbels on the radio in Russian and learned the story the racists invented about the seventy Zionist elders who in their protocols ("The Protocols of Elders of Zion") said: The Arabs must be driven from Palestine so that we can build our main synagogue on Mount Zion in Jerusalem to house the world Zionist conspiracy directed at the very heart of freedom-loving peoples (The Yids want nothing to do with them!) with the goal of world Jewish domination. At the time, I thought that this was only Gnatyuk's notion. But we read on page 58 of the booklet by T. Kichko which I already referred to, "Judaism and Zionism": "Precisely to attract the broad masses of working class Jews to their ideal—*establishing a world state*—the Zionists promoted the harmful and false theory of the eternal suffering by Jews in the diaspora (diaspora means dispersion, exile). Leaving aside the "false theory of suffering," I would note that Kichko finds the broad masses of workers able to be attracted—by means of false theories!—to the *ideal of a world state*. In this regard, we might ask: does he think workers of

In 1977, a manuscript totalling hundreds of pages arrived in this country from the Soviet Union—the memoirs of Mikhail Baitalsky, who was in his middle 70s at the time and living in Moscow. His work consists of a series of nine "notebooks" which describe his life as a Ukrainian Jewish revolutionary militant. He narrates how, as a teenager inspired by the October revolution, he joined the Communist Youth, tells about his participation in the Red Army during the Civil War years that followed 1917, his disenchantment with the developing bureaucracy under Stalin, and his subsequent experiences in Stalin's prison camps. To the very end of his life Baitalsky remained devoted to the ideals of the October revolution. He says that he is writing "for the grandchildren" so that they can know the truth of the revolution's early years.

any nationality could be attracted to this or only Jewish workers?

In truth, Dmitro could have selected no worse thesis to defend!

"But their Zionist, Jewish kingdom," he proclaimed (I am talking about Gnatyuk), "must be razed to its foundations! No one can touch them but they push their way in everywhere!" Then I remembered what I had heard: "Why are you pushing like a Jew?"

At the same time, he mentioned that the USSR had made a mistake in supporting the UN General Assembly resolution on the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine, a territory absolutely alien to Jews. "Jerusalem," Dmitro declared, "was never Jewish, just as Koenigsberg was never Polish! I read the history myself!" Dmitro did not say who had written the history he read. Perhaps it was Alfred Rosenberg, a well-known Hitlerite "theoretician." After hearing Gnatyuk's theory, much about politics became clear to me. But you will ask why I did not argue with Gnatyuk? For the simple reason that no matter how much he orated about Jews, no one ever informed on him to the authorities. But there would have immediately been half a dozen denunciations of me turned in (Dmitro himself would have written the first one), and to my "Trotskyism" would then have been added the make-weight charge of "Zionism"—a charge which it is impossible in such circumstances for a Jew to promise to recant.

Still, in the 16 years that have passed since the day Stalin died I have become a little braver and now intend to argue a bit with Gnatyuk; I know that he is not dead. The argument will be about Jews. To converse with him on other themes is boring; but on this question, it is amusing and instructive.

When Dmitro gets angry, he lisps more than usual. "Jews," he says, "seized the land of the Arabs and humiliated the women and children. Do you think the Arabs placed that bomb in the market in Jerusalem or in the Tel Aviv bus station or in the university dining room or in the theater? Ha-ha-ha! The Jews did this themselves! They needed to have a bomb kill several women and children, which it did, so they could then bawl on their Jewish BBC about how the Soviet or French partisans may have fought the German soldiers, but the Arabs are waging a war against old women in marketplaces and against students at the university. The Jews are sly! Didn't you know that they themselves incited Hitler to kill six million Jews? They themselves, for God's sake! And now they aren't even complying with the UN Security Council resolution, the bastards! We have to crush all of you!"

"Dmitro," I say in response, "do you know, bright head, that of all the Arab states waging war against the Jews, only the UAR and Jordan have recognized this resolution while Syria, Algeria, and Iraq have not recognized it at all? Not only are they not complying with it; they simply do not recognize it and have declared that they never will and will fight until victory."

"Where did you learn this, Jew boy?" Dmitri would get angry. "I read our own Soviet press and I never saw anything like that. Did you by chance get this from your Jewish BBC?"

"From there. But *Pravda* also spoke about this; but you do not know how to read *Pravda*. Open the issue of March 12, 1969. Read the article from correspondent Ye. Primakov: 'Political observers in Cairo noted in particular that the speech of Golda Meir, who is preparing to occupy the post of prime

minister of Israel after the death of Eshkol, did not even mention the Security Council resolution.' Did you understand? She did not even mention it! What insolence! And now take a look at another page in that same issue, at a joint communique about the visit to the USSR of the Algerian minister of foreign affairs Abdelaziz Buteflik. It is long but read only the paragraph about Israeli aggression: "The sides noted that the Israeli occupation of Arab territory and its ceaseless military provocations raise the urgent need for united action by all the Arab governments and the strengthening on the part of the anti-imperialist forces of their struggle for the liquidation of the consequences of the aggression and the establishment of a firm peace in the Near East on the basis of respect for the legal rights of the Arab peoples, including the Arab population of Palestine.' Did you read that? Did you find one word about the Security Council resolution? Did you notice which people's rights need to be respected? So, Mr. Big Head! Who must comply with the resolution and who doesn't have to?"

But because Dmitro cannot answer this and no other Dmitro will answer it either, my Gnatyuk bursts into rabid profanity, which I will not repeat, the more so because it put too much emphasis on a state, the very right to whose existence has yet to be fully clarified. I lie on the second bunk, telling about Gnatyuk; it is time to draw this to a close.

What remains to be said about him so that it will not appear that I am telling only part of the truth? In addition to providing ideological leadership, he earned his way as an informer. Later on he was freed. And he is miraculously still alive. I have no accurate information as to where he is pontificating now. But I can guess.

Opposite Gnatyuk, in the privileged corner by the stove, sleeps Ivan Voronov, the senior orderly of the barracks. Only the most trusted ZKs get that job. He must maintain not only the barrack's external cleanliness.

Voronov had aged long ago. This lanky guy, with a sad look from pretty black eyes, was a genuine almond-eyed beauty. During the years of the occupation, he served in the Gestapo with such devotion that he earned an officer's rank. A Soviet court had commuted his sentence of death by firing squad to 25 years at hard labor because he had allowed two Soviet prisoners of war to escape. Something must have come over him on that strange day.

I wasn't waiting for Voronov to pour out his feelings to me. However, on a dark winter day, while the night shift was asleep, I was lying down with my eyes open and he came and sat down and began to talk. Perhaps he was trying to get me to be open in return.

Ivan began with his childhood. He was a Don Cossack. They lived well. His father was dispossessed as a kulak and sent away, and his mother took the children and went to the city. Ivan used few words, but I understood that he remembered those years very well and took a full measure of revenge for them. He graduated from a mining technical school and was working as a foreman in a mine when the war began. At that point, Ivan fell silent and went to give orders. The floors in the barracks were being scrubbed and he—the man in charge—had to look after this. That was his penal camp labor.

Months went by. Ivan and I had no more conversations. Once some supervisors showed up at the barracks with instructions: an order went out (something had to be banned every day or

what kind of an official are you!) that the ZKs were to keep nothing in their pillows or under their mattresses. There were not very many bedside tables in the barracks; and therefore we put out rations in our pillows. We were afraid of theft even though the jackals (there is no need, it seems to me, to explain who this word refers to) were also forbidden to keep rations in their pillows. So, you could keep your bread any place you wanted but not in your pillow.

Not far from me slept a German, a former pilot. He read a great deal and exchanged literature with other Germans and had several books of his own in German and English. Voronov approached him with the demand: clear off your bunk! The German argued: books do not make things dirty. Ivan seized the books—don't give a German a break. The Germans had a small vocabulary of basic camp words. Barely mustering his mangled language, the former pilot for Hitler sent the former officer of Hitler's secret police to a well-known place.

Voronov's beautiful eyes began to glare.

"Why you, German mug! You want to send me, a Russian, to such a place? Go to that place yourself, you German snout!"

He called the supervisors, sent to oversee the barrack's sanitation, and repeated:

"This German insulted me, a Russian. Look, he is still muttering something, that German mug!"

The impudent German, insulter of Russians, was taken away and placed in isolation. Thus Ivan Voronov, the former servant of the Germans, had again become Russian.

After familiarizing you with the German officer Ivan Voronov, it is in order to review the crime and punishment of

a young demobilized Soviet sailor Boris Rabin. He also received a 25-year term.

His case went like this. He stopped by a restaurant, began to drink and boxed the manager in the face. Then he ended up resisting the militiamen whom the manager had summoned. He did not shoot at them or even wave a pen knife at them. He merely resisted.

Boris Rabin was convicted. I read the sentence; Boris had been given a copy. "The accused, while sitting in a restaurant, had asked the band to play a Jewish nationalist dance 'Freilich.'" Notice: it is not a national but a nationalist dance!

The manager of the restaurant, a true proletarian internationalist, forbade the band to play a melody so full of racist hatred. Then he told Rabin that he would not allow any Yid music to be played in a Soviet entertainment center. This remark is what earned him a box in the face from Boris Rabin.

My acquaintanceship with Boris did not last long. In 1956, the charge against him was reclassified to hooliganism. The time he had served was taken into account, and he left. However, I will never forget the name of the judge: Teteria, servant of justice, proletarian internationalist, fighter against world Zionism.

For his "hooliganism" Boris served five years. Now you tell me: if I had given Gnatyuk a slap in the face for his endless talk about Jews, which of us would have gotten a five-year term?

[Next Month: "The Exiled Vote"]

TDU (Continued from page 20)

hope. President Nixon let Hoffa out of jail for Christmas 1971 but the package had a string attached . . . Hoffa could not get his old job back. To some this looked like a fair deal all around: Hoffa got out; Fitzsimmons stayed on as union president; and Nixon got the endorsement and big financial contributions of the Teamsters union for a second term in the White House. But the membership of the Teamsters union paid the price in lower wages and lost conditions of work. In the final shakedown the employers were the big winners and Hoffa was handed his death warrant.

What has TDU learned from these accumulated IBT experiences?

Obviously there are dangers in government involvement in unions, as

TDU's leaders are among the first to acknowledge. Roosevelt's use of the FBI against the Teamsters in 1941, Eisenhower's anti-labor investigations, Nixon's alliance with Fitzsimmons and Reagan's with Presser are sufficient reasons for distrust of the government. For almost fifty years the Democrats and the Republicans have attempted to subordinate the Teamsters union to their political agenda and have largely succeeded in doing so. Certainly since the Nixon administration the Teamsters union has been dominated not only by the mob but also held hostage by the government.

What La Botz writes about the Teamsters being "held hostage by the

government" applies to the AFL-CIO as well. The labor movement is held hostage, imprisoned in a net of restrictive legislation. What can be done to liberate working people in this country may depend in large part upon the future development of TDU. Its achievements are proof that it is on the right track to self-determination by the working class. □

[The Teamsters for a Democratic Union discount price for *Rank-and-File Rebellion* is \$17. Write: TDU, P.O. Box 10128, Detroit, MI 48210.]

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